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THE BOOKMAN

A CURSORY VIEW OF SWEARING

By John Macy

THE amusingly horrid little sister in Mr. Tarkington's "Seventeen" is forbidden by her mother to quote "damn" in her report of an adult conversation. So she substitutes "word" for "damn" and "wordest" for "damnedest". It is a good bit of comedy, and part of the humor of it lies in the mother's assumption that the interests of morality have been served by the substitution. It burlesques the prudery of good people who weaken the oral language and disfigure the written for the sake of appearances, and, worse than that, are themselves deceived by appearances, duped into believing that an altered exterior acquits them of responsibility for the interior meaning.

The modifications and enfeeblements of honest words are probably not all due to the timidity and hypocrisy of our degenerate English speaking breed. Some are due, perhaps, to the pleasure that we all take in twisting words out of shape. The minced forms of "damn", such as "darn" and "dang", and of "God", such as "gosh", are whimsical distortions rather than cowardly corruptions. On the lips of some people on certain occasions they still have a faintly humorous flavor.

But the motive of squeamishness undoubtedly underlies the formation and use of these crippled euphemisms; and this squeamishness is not only fig leaf false modesty but superstitious fear. Savages hoping to propitiate and cajole their gods do not call things by their names but employ symbols which everybody understands, including, a logical theologian would suppose, the gods themselves. Among our white savages, our more or less civilized American natives, some of whom can be foul beyond the most liberal limits of print, there seems to be an occult virtue in saying "Judas Priest!" instead of "Jesus Christ!" The savage is, of course, no longer conscious of religious motives. He is not aware of what he is saying or why. Whatever his mature vices, he is intellectually a child, and, at least in his exple-

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tives, he is as innocent as the small boy who says "Gee". In a respectable Godfearing household the parents of the small boy are only semiconscious of their motives when they scold or spank him for uttering what is obviously the first syllable of "Jesus". The whole word would be wicked; the part is only naughty.

I began this investigation with the idea that diluted cursing must correspond somehow to the commercial fraud and intellectual poltroonery of recent times, that it was a slight reflection of an era of paper leather, sawdust coffee, dehumanized beer, and expurgated thought. This is not quite true of the spoken language, so far as I can judge by comparing what I hear from the lips of living people with what old fiction, drama, and the dictionaries record of the speech of our forefathers. Some of the imitation swear words go back many centuries, and men of former times seem to have had a larger battery of wooden guns than are now in use. This does not mean, however, that our ancestors were more reticent than we are in the use of brass and iron. Quite the contrary. They mixed the weak and the strong and bequeathed the mixture to us.

In the printed language, even in books that pretend to represent the oral habits of people of all classes, there has been for more than a century a progressive debilitation of profanity. In part the weakness is a mere matter of spelling. Stout words have been eviscerated, disenvoweled. We save our souls by typographical devices which deceive nobody, certainly not the gods, and are idiotic enough to make the devil smile. Here is one which ought to tickle the old boy.

In a play by Mr. Galsworthy, called "The Little Man", published in 1921, a character is made to say: "Waiter, where to h-ll is that flash of beer?"

Nobody ever said "h-ll". It can be done, because the "l" is subvocal. But if you try the word without the "e", you will not find it satisfactory, especially for emotional purposes. What cautious editor (surely, it was not Mr. Galsworthy) was afraid of "hell"—as a word? It cannot offend the high gods and is not irreverent to the lower gods. Why make a consonantal shell of it? What the hell is the matter with it?

I began to look back in English literature to see when this hyphenated devocalization of words became prevalent. My findings are fragmentary and not conclusive, but they suggest that this kind of suppression of types dates from about the middle of the eighteenth century, a ribald, cynical, elaborately courteous age, in which niceness and naughtiness, sly circumlocutions and Swiftian downrightness, are curiously blended.

In the Dent edition of Fielding (1893, Saintsbury editor) "Zounds" is spelled "Z—ds". Did Fielding write it so? Was it so in the eighteenth century editions? Saintsbury's note says that he has followed the "standard or first collected edition of 1762", and corrected only a "few obvious errors". This standard edition, published eight years after Fielding's death, probably reproduces the editions that Fielding himself had seen, and, at least so far as naughty words are concerned, represents the typographical habits of the time. And certainly Saintsbury, who is no prude, would not have tampered with spelling to please an English public or a Scots Presbyterian God.

However that may be, it is amusing to note that in this edition of Field-

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ing there is no consistent practice in hushing the sound of sacred words. In "Joseph Andrews" the robbers answer Joseph "with an oath" and say, "Be d-mn'd to you." Here the vowel is throttled. A few lines below one of the robbers snaps a pistol at poor Joseph, "damning his eyes", and the "a" is printed in full throated ease. On the next page, when the coach comes by and the passengers find Joseph, robbed, groaning, and stripped, the lady cries: "O J-sus! a naked man!" Here only one vowel is dropped. Later the Deity is represented by an initial: "by G—." And — this is almost incredible — when the devout Parson Adams, a sincere Christian, is solemnly explaining to Joseph the rules of the Church governing marriage, he is made to say: "As many as are joined together otherwise than G—'s word doth allow are not joined together by G—." Here there is no question of blasphemy. The law of God is invoked with the utmost reverence.

In my edition of Sterne, published in 1793, twenty-five years after the death of that laughing wearer of the cloth, I find many mutilated words. This is to be expected, for Sterne raised h-ll with types and with words of all kinds. His asterisks, dashes, rules, break offs, suspensions, and eccentricities of punctuation are enough to make a printer go off and get drunker than usual. In "Tristram Shandy" are two famous passages about swearing. One is the pseudo-sentimental passage in which Uncle Toby swears that Le Fever "shall not die, by G—."

The ACCUSING SPIRIT, which flew to heaven's chancery with the oath, blush'd as he gave it in; — and the RECORDING ANGEL, as he wrote it down, dropp'd a tear upon the word, and blotted it out for ever.

Sterne has his tongue in his cheek, as always, and is poking fun at the popular fallacy that an "oath" is immoral. For good Uncle Toby is only praying that a man's life may be spared.

The second passage is a mock discourse on "fit forms of swearing suitable to all cases". The immediate occasion is that Dr. Slop has cut his finger and used language. Mr. Shandy discusses appropriate curses, small and large, and makes the doctor read aloud, in Latin and English, a form of excommunication from the Church, under cover of Uncle Toby's whistling. Into the reading Uncle Toby interjects his classic comment: "Our armies swore terribly in Flanders, but nothing to this."

Mr. Shandy maintains that all "the oaths and imprecations which we have been puffing off upon the world for these two hundred and fifty years last past as originals" were borrowed from the compilation of the learned Bishop Ernulphus. "My father would ofttimes affirm, there was not an oath from the great and tremendous oath of William the Conqueror *(By the splendour of God)* down to the lowest oath of a scavenger *(Damn your eyes)* which was not to be found in Ernulphus. — In short, he would add — I defy a man to swear *out* of it."

In English literature before the eighteenth century oaths were taken for granted. At any rate, the printers did not cut the lungs out of words sacred or profane. To be sure, the names of mundane dignitaries were disguised and suppressed for fear of the libel laws and more direct modes of punishment. But that is another matter. It is related to soft pedaled profanity, perhaps, in a vague way; the respect due great and dangerous earthly persons and the respect due

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great and dangerous supernatural persons merged in a common piety, and the wrath of all orders of authority had to be warded off and dodged. But in Shakespeare's time, at once superstitious and sophisticated, tricks of type were used as a defense against practical worldly perils; there was no attempt to bluff the celestial and infernal powers by petty subterfuges of spelling.

For evidence of this, we who own no early editions may confidently depend on modern literal reprints and facsimiles. For oddly enough, while the written language was growing ever more pusillanimous, and the English classics, especially Shakespeare, were being Bowdlerized for high schools and the parlor tables, honest modern scholars, such as the editors of the Mermaid Dramatists, have given us faithful texts of the old writers. These scholars, whatever their shortcomings, are scholars and gentlemen; they are literally loyal philologists and are no more afraid of a bad word than a botanist is afraid of an evil smelling herb. They are anxious only to find out and preserve what the author wrote and what the early printers printed; and they would amputate their right hands rather than excise a single letter which they believe ought, ought in a literary and historical sense, to be there.

In these reprints I cannot find any parts of speech from which the vibrations of the larynx are omitted for moral reasons. The oaths are all spelled out, and in that sense "mouth-filling", as Shakespeare's Hotspur says to his wife when he laughs at her "in sooth" and bids her swear "like a lady as thou art".

Shakespeare represents the soldier, in Jaques's speech about the seven ages of man, as "full of strange oaths". Of course in that place he does not give examples. Evidently our armies swore terribly in Flanders and elsewhere before the time of Uncle Toby. And in that respect the soldier has not changed. The English speaking armies that recently visited the continent of Europe used language which sincere chroniclers like Mr. Dos Passos, in "Three Soldiers", are obliged to tone down to a faint suggestion.

The speech of common men, when they are freed from certain social restraints, is, no doubt, as violently and abundantly profane as it was in more spacious days, though literature is no longer permitted to reproduce it. The diminution has not been in the quantity of spoken profanity but in the quality. There has been a loss in variety, in richness of vocabulary. And it is not likely that the losses are being replaced by new words. In some departments of language there are novelties and replenishments. But oaths, like the religions to which they are related, are conservative. It is not in the spirit of our times to find new gods to swear by or devise new ways of swearing by the old. It will be long, centuries long, before "by Swedenborg" or "by Mother Eddy" can be felt as grave sins or as nervous explosions. I suggest these illustrations with no disrespect for any creed or sect, with no interest except that of a student of philology and literature.

There can be no doubt that the glossary of swearing has shrunk. It has been shrinking within the memory of people now living. For example, the Century Dictionary, which is over forty years old, informs us that "Ecod" is [now rare]. In Dickens's time it must have been current, for he puts it into the mouths of several characters, notably Jonas Chuzzlewit.

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Dickens, by the way, was one of the most sensitive listeners to the speech of people and one of the most skilful phoneticians in rendering that speech in readable form with our twenty-six letters. I cannot quite prove that, because Dickens and his people died, in the flesh, before I had a chance to overhear them. But I am sure of it, just the same. And I am also sure that, if his public would have allowed it, he could have given us some ripping stuff from the streets and dens of London. Much that fell on the ears of Oliver Twist could not be set down in the pages of a popular novel.

Some old curses and near-curses have gone out because people have forgotten what they mean. "Gadzooks", "odsbodikins", "'slife", "'sblood" are as harmless as blunderbusses in a museum, and probably their significance had ceased to be felt long before they became obsolete in the oral language. Walter Scott seems to have been the last important writer to make serious use of their faded picturesqueness. And even in him they only make us laugh now, or they make no impression at all.

Forgotten meanings, mistaken interpretations, and accidental assimilations of sound play a large part in the history of language, and an especially large part in the history of swear words. There are two amusing illustrations of misunderstanding due to sound. In the phrases "not worth a curse", and "not worth a damn", "curse" and "damn" are intended to express something valueless, trifling, like "fig", or "snap". How can this be, when "curse" and "damn" have always been words of great import? The reason is that they are unconscious puns, or cases of mistaken identity. "Curse" here is "kerse", that is "cress", the water plant; so that "not to care a curse" is, originally, like "not to care a straw".

"Damn" is similarly explained in a learned work on religious history, "The Gnostics and Their Remains" by C. W. King, though the dictionaries do not seem to bear its author out. According to him "dam" (without the "n") is a small Indian coin. Thus "not worth a dam" means simply not worth a sou, or a farthing, or a red cent. An analogous phrase is "not worth a rap". "Rap" is the name of the counterfeit halfpenny that circulated in Ireland in the reign of George I. The word is used and defined by Swift in his attack on the coinage swindles of the time. Perhaps the idea behind the word is the practice of sounding a coin to test its metal.

It is a great relief to have these homonyms explained. When you say that the furnace or a Congressman is "not worth a damn" and your wife admonishes you not to use such words before the children, you may smile in a superior way, knowing that you are right about the furnace or the Congressman and also that your language is impeccable. In the spoken tongue you keep the "n" to yourself anyway.

More serious than philological misunderstandings is the misinterpretation by pious people of the Bible commandments. The third commandment has nothing to do with so trivial a matter as an expletive or an ejaculated swear word when you stub your toe. It has to do with the serious obligation of keeping one's promise and living up to one's word. This is obvious from the way in which the commandment is paraphrased and developed in the Sermon on the Mount. It is clearly referred to as a commandment against forswearing, against non-performance. Christ revises the commandment by forbidding all oaths: "Let your com-

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munication be, Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay." That a man's word should be as good as his oath seems to be sound sense and common honesty, whatever the religious sanctions may be. Sometimes in courts of law, where the oath survives as little more than a matter of form, a conscientious person, in literal obedience to the Sermon on the Mount, will refuse to swear. The law treats him like a gentleman, accepts his affirmation, but does not hold him immune from the penalties for "perjury". You cannot help respecting him, if only because he takes seriously the routine hocus pocus to which nobody else is paying any attention. When a lawyer pretends to take it seriously and says to a witness: "But did you not say *under oath* that so and so", it is to laugh. A witness who is going to lie will lie, oath or no oath.

From ancient times to our degenerate days an oath has always been a solemn thing intended to secure honesty of action. The old priests and law makers were concerned with practical results rather than with idle words. They probably had a sacerdotal objection to the frivolous utterance of any terms which had sacred connotations. But it is straining far away from their main purposes to apply "swear" in the Bible sense to what happens when you run against the corner of a table in the dark.

Another blunder common among the virtuously uninstructed is the confusion of "swear" and "curse". Uncle Toby falls into this error (it is, of course, one of Sterne's jokes) when he compares the swearing of the armies with the anathematic words of the excommunication. Swearing, especially in the sense of forswearing, is a sin against heaven. A curse invokes the power of heaven against an enemy or an offender. It may be awful in phrasing and inspired by unchristian motives of malice and hatred, but it is reverent to the higher powers, is, indeed, a form of prayer to them. The Bible makes this perfectly clear. Some of the most devastating maledictions were denounced by the Almighty Himself or by His authority. To curse a man is an insult to the man, but not to God. To curse a dog is a compliment to the dog and an insult to human intelligence. To curse a motor that will not start is an absurdity, unless, by implication, the curse extends to the manufacturer.

When a curse is directed *against* a sacred object, it becomes a grave crime in the eyes of ecclesiastical and civil law. A new element is introduced. It is blasphemy. That is another word frequently abused and misapprehended. Blasphemy is any irreverent utterance against any worshipful person or thing. Bacon speaks of "blasphemy against learning". The use of "strong" words is not necessarily involved. In English common law a mere flat denial of the providence of God may be blasphemy. An ironic remark of, say, Voltaire, in the most chaste and delicate style, may be extremely blasphemous. Blackstone defines one form of the crime as "scoffing at the Holy Scripture, or exposing it to contempt or ridicule". Under this definition much of Nietzsche's work is criminal according to English common law, and publishers of such works could be haled into court, fined and jailed. Yet Nietzsche's work is on the highest plane of diction, free from such puerilities as are usually called profanity.

"Profanity", as ordinarily used, is synonymous with cursing, swearing, and blasphemy. The synonymity is loose and in some degree erroneous. But it is easily explained by the his-

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tory of the word. The "pro-fane" were those outside the temple, the uninitiated, and hence, the ignorant, the rabble, the mob, the vulgar. In its strict and learned sense no opprobrium attaches to it. Profane history is simply secular history. Profane literature is that which deals with other than sacred objects. In another sense "profane" came to mean low and common, as well as impious and wicked. Language, the literary language, has been shaped by the master classes, civil, religious, and intellectual, and it has no respect for the multitude; it got well established before democracy learned how to read and write. Words degenerate and yet they cannot shake off their ancestry. The result is sometimes humorous. The nice person who says that "profanity is vulgar" is uttering a vulgarity and yet is unconsciously true to history and philology.

Ordinary idle swearing, the sort that has neither solemnity nor intention, is to be judged not on ethical grounds but on the grounds of good taste. The man who fills up his sentences with meaningless cuss words (an "expletive" is something which "fills up") is usually a man of limited ideas, the vast majority of mankind, the man whose speech is also wearisomely loaded with other useless unexpressions, clichés, stale slang. Byron hits this weakness in the line:

He knew not what to say and so he swore.

In one of his novels Marion Crawford says that swearing is the refuge of those who lack vocabulary.

But this is not always true. There are rare and original fellows, all too rare, sailors, woodsmen, workmen, with a real gift of speech, on whose tongue profanity sits naturally and easily, and whose talk without it would be less effective. And at least one highly literate man, whose vocabulary was large and who knew how to use it, was an eloquent swearer. That was Mark Twain. His wife and Howells suppressed the naughty words in his books, even where they were exactly appropriate, as in "Huckleberry Finn". But they never emasculated his speech, which was a deliberate, consciously artful blend of Elizabethan and wild west. He chose his words carefully and took time to think of the right ones (that was one reason for his "drawl"). His swearing was not "in vain" and it was not on the whole "humorous". When he made the air blue, the color was real. He appreciated competent swearing in others and told, more than once, the story of a sea captain whose swearing he had so accurately described and imitated that his friend, the Reverend Joseph Twitchell, stumbling on the captain by chance and overhearing him, recognized him at once. According to the story the captain had let fall an oath that "hit the deck and bounced over the mizzenmast". Mark Twain tells in his "Autobiography" (where he plays like a naughty boy) of throwing badly made shirts out the window, not in silence, of being overheard by Mrs. Clemens, and of her repeating his words to rebuke him. Though this tickled him, it seems to me a piece of bad acting on her part. Of course Mark Twain was a very funny man. But when, in a divine rage, he let fly at the cruelty and baseness of some of the "damned human race", it was no joke, it was dignified cursing worthy of the prophets.

We may summarize this erudite and moral discourse by giving a list of specimens with short explanations:

"I swear [or "by God"] I will kill that man." A true oath or swearing. So far as the oath is concerned

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the sin would consist in breaking the promise, though in this case the fulfilment of the oath would be another crime.

"By God, it's a cold day!" Not an oath. Swearing only in the secondary sense. The speaker cannot do anything about the weather. He may be responsible for the accuracy of his statement, but no man perjures himself about an obviously verifiable matter, except the Weather Bureau which deals in futures.

"Damn you!" A true, though abbreviated, curse, a prayer to God that you may be sent to everlasting torment.

"Damn it!" No curse, since the object is impersonal.

"Damn!" No curse, since there is no object.

Both of the foregoing may become curses if the personal objects are implied.

"A damned fool." Merely a characterization. Assumes an accomplished fact.

"A damn fool." Bad grammar.

"Hell!" Not swearing or cursing in any sense of the words.

All the foregoing may be profanity or vulgarity.

"God made man in his own image and man returned the compliment." Blasphemy, but neither swearing nor cursing. Not profanity, since it is the product of refined and aristocratic wit.

"Darn you!" Spurious cursoid.

"—— ——" A printer's device.

I swear that the foregoing statements are true to the best of my knowledge and recollection.

CLOCKS

By Alter Brody

ALL around the empty room
In the indefinite shadows shifting uneasily under the feeble gas jet
The clocks hung solemnly on the walls,
Gazing at the stiff figure seated upright in the bed,
With awed, ominous faces;
Their pendulums clicking back and forth,
Like brusk warders
Pacing before a death cell.

On the bed,
Beside the brooding safe littered with dismembered watches,
The dying man sat upright like a propped corpse—
His eyes paralyzed on a clock,
Watching the hands that he had just repaired
Measuring out his life on a marked, round table.

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THE PARODY OUTLINE OF LITERATURE

IX: CIRCE AND ULYSSES*

By Rupert Hughes

Illustrated by Herb Roth

The Story Thus Far—

THIS greatest of all novels, written, of course, by the Balzac of Bedford Hills, the Sophokles of Keokuk, and the La Rochefoucauld of Los Angeles, reaches heights hitherto unattained even by him. In no other novel has the Master so exquisitely combined his peculiar ideas of antiquity and modernity. The plot is as novel as the treatment is dignified; and the author's hilarious pessimism is perfectly matched by his hopeless optimism.

The marrow-curdling plot opens in Troy, already shaken to its foundations by the arrival of its leading lounge lizard, Mayor Priam's son Paris, with the well known vampire Mrs. Helen Menelaus (née Tyndareus) with whom he had eloped with.

Mr. Menelaus surprised all Troy by coming after his wife, under the thin disguise of attendance on a Rotarian convention. The Rotarians had planned to burn the old town down with their revels. Prominent among them was Ulysses S. G. Laertes, Mayor of Ithaca, and head of his home town convention.

Back numbers of "The Scarlet Magazine" will have to be secured to gain a just idea of the eventfulness of this Trojan meet. At the end of it, however, Ulysses and his fellow townsmen gathered at the union depot to take the home bound train for Ithaca, Utica, Syracuse and all points west. At the very moment another express roared into the station polyphloisboietically. This latter train was on its way to the southern lotus lands and the isle of Manattana with all its witcheries. The tenth instalment ended with Ulysses pondering which train to take.

In one direction lay home and mother (whose charms the author has already sufficiently described in his famous picture "The Old Vest" —now playing at your neighborhood centre of cinematography — if not, complain to the management). In the other direction lay Manattana (scene of "What Won't People Say?", "Empty Plackets", "The Eighteenth Commandment", "Clipped Winks", "Sails for Soles", and other wonderful novels by the author).

Now, Ulysses had never visited Manattana, but he had heard the fulness of an ear thereof and had been told that it was best described by the Syracusan epithet, "niftos".

He dared not leave his innocent Ithacans to the mercy of the far-laundering poly-collaring Trojans. He could not trust them to re-Ithacate themselves.

As Ulysses mused upon the exquisite situation he realized that once he went home to his wife Penelope, he would never get away again without her. He recalled the ancient saw: "How little he knows New York who does not see New York alone." Ulysses went to New York, and while there—

*This is the ninth instalment of the series in which various American authors, using well known tales, attempt to parody themselves.

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The millions of readers who have been kept awake for thirty days and nights wondering what happened to the Ithacans in Manattana will have their curiosity more than satisfied by this superlative instalment.

CHAPTER XIX

NIGHT filled the star-besprent sky above Manattana, but the Edison Co. filled it fuller with a grandeur of electric signs, epics in bulbs, and incandescent eclogues; as if Ajax had not merely defied the thunderbolts of Zeus but had subdued them to his hand.

Above all the high-towering towers soared a higher tower at whose peak was revel. Here the lithe votaries of Terpsichore beat the theatre with rhythmic buskin, to the honey-sweet tunes of the bards who worship Melpomene, goddess of memory.

Thither were wafted in winged chariots the gilded gentry of the city and the buyers from the farthest colonies.

And the queen of this realm was named Circe. In the speech of the islanders this was heard as "Soissy" though the barbarians snarled it with the dog-letter audible, "Surrsy".

The ever-clever Ulysses, having a friend with the show, managed a meeting with the queen of the night and spoke her full and fair:

"Say, girlie, how do you pronounce your name anyhow?"

With eyes akimbo, Circe murmured circishly:

"My friends call me 'Cissy' — and they wink when they say it."

Without a moment's delay the waggish Ulysses wagged:

"Say, Cis, how about a little party after your dance is did?"

She murmured in a dialect delicately wavering between Aeolian and Victrolian:

"Surest thing you know."

CHAPTER XX

HAVING no acquaintances among the Internal Revenue agents of the city, Ulysses was unable to purchase wassail, so he was forced to ask a policeman, who promptly sold him all he needed for the party, which was a stag, save for the one doe, Circe!

After the whisking away of many tails of cocks, many a Scotch eyeball was inspected, and even campaign wine was oped.

Loud and long laughed Ulysses, forgetful of Penelope, the tireless knitwit who would sit and unknit all night what she had sat and knat all day.

And Circe laughed with Ulysses, making him sing to her the native ballads of Ithaca, Cayuga and other shires, especially his olden battle song: "Cornell, I yell like hell, Cornell!"

As the night wore on and the alcohilarity of the Ithacans grew more wearing, Ulysses dolefully observed that futile as he may be who brings his spouse to Manattana he is more futile far who brings with him his fellow clubmen.

And even Circe, perfect hostess though she was, could hardly hide behind her hand her delicate yawn, as she sighed:

"Sad dogs, those thugs of yours."

"Dogs — nay, swine!" growled Ulysses.

And swine they were. For with a sudden access of frenzy, a fierce gnashing of tusks, the bewitched victims of bootleggerdemain rose as one swine, and —

The thrilling dénouement of this masterly scene will be found in the next instalment. On all newsstands the 23rd of next month.

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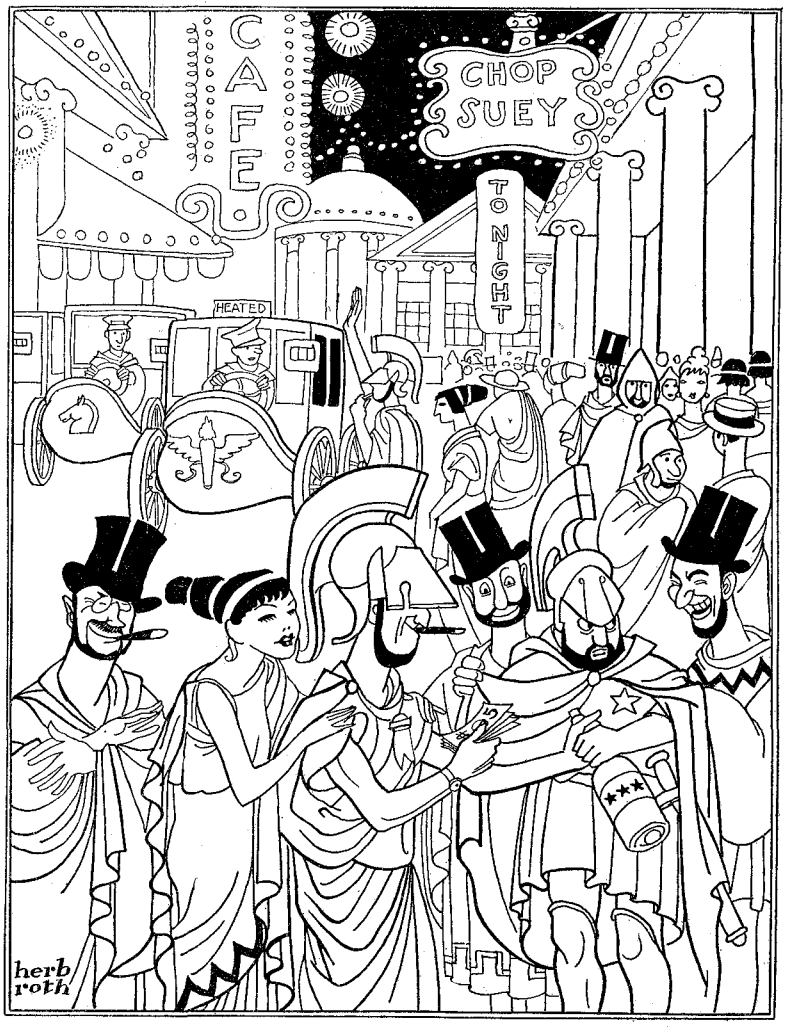

Ulysses purchases wassail from a Manattana policeman

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THE SKETCH BOOK

ROSSETTI ON THE CORNISH COAST

By Arthur Symons

AT Boscastle, as at Tintagel, we are in the world of Old Romance. From the height from which one looks steep down into a ghastly gulley, haunted by few birds, on the right, across a narrow harbor, rises a romantic summit carved by nature into strange shapes. An image sprang into my mind — Coleridge's, in his "Kubla Khan":

> But, oh, that deep romantic chasm which slanted
> Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cavern.
> A savage place! as holy and enchanted
> As ever beneath a waking moon was haunted
> By woman wailing for her demon-lover.

Here one's senses are bewildered by certain extravagances of aspects as one sees these two unequal heights, grim guardians of the coast; and, beyond, the unresting sea; in winter storm winged, in autumn savage. In all this splendor there is no luxuriance, no sense of anything but of the change of seasons and of tides; this coast so perilous to sailors. On nights of utter darkness, when the winds howl an unearthly music across the heaving waves and one's ears are dimmed by a great multitude of noises, it seems a Godforsaken kind of land.

From Boscastle to Tintagel one walks along the cliffs — a rough path, that has many twists and turnings. Tintagel, enormous, old as the world, on the iron bound coast of Cornwall, sheer down on the Atlantic, where the sea is never quiet, where the waves roar in the murky caves, where the white foam lashes the cliffs; this monstrous sea scarred, sea swept barrier against eternity is certainly, with Land's End and Inishmore on the Aran Island, a menace and a wonder.

When the fires of the sunset shine on the ruinous walls of Tintagel — sombre, formidable, malevolent, impregnable — these take on aspects of a curious blending of light and shade; every jagged outline is seen distinct, like the jagged curves of the Apennines I have seen, sharp on the sea, at Rimini. Here the colors change, fade; become sinister, ominous as the light wanes, and these uncouth, giant-like shapes remain tenebrous.

But when the terror of the night is upon us and the wind shakes the waves into surging white mouths of foam and cries desolately across these naked heights; when one hears the sea gulls scream —

> As if these windy bodies with the sea's
> Unfriended heart within them for a voice
> Have turned to mock one:

then one's imagination is stirred, stirred to exult with these exultant, destroying, unappeasable elements.

For, does not the wind wander as it asks, in an unknown tongue, infinite unimaginable things? Does not the sea threaten us with some sudden death (beyond that "lawless and uncertain thought" one "imagines howling") out of the deadly air? Do not even sea gulls shake over us their sorrowful laughter?

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II

Tonight, New Year's Eve, I wandered along a lonely and narrow and steep lane, with high hedges and immense trees; I heard the running of pure water, that curious sound of a babbling brook. Suddenly an owl began to hoot, he hooted once; there was silence; then the owls began to hoot at intervals, with their three or four or five notes, then other distinct notes, the varied notes of the owls in the nearer and more distant trees. Then I heard — it struck on me curiously — at long intervals, piercing and inhuman shrieks which reminded me of the raucous voices of the cats at night. Soon, on every side, from wood to wood, some so far off I could hardly distinguish their voices, vibrated, and most magically and most mysteriously, this chorus of the owls; alternate voice after alternate voice, always, to my ear, with varieties in the music of their voices, which, with the wonder of the night — a night with a Tiepolo Venetian sky full of violent contrasts of colors, with under it the enormous and majestic vision of I know not how many trees in one cluster, in one serried and sombre mass — revealed to me the mystery and the magical enchantment of such nights, nights which I have found only in Cornwall and in Spain. The heart of the mystery was in the mysterious hearts of these wise and enigmatical owls, whom one so rarely sees — several this night flew over me from wood to wood — whom I have always imagined to be pagan spirits, reincarnations, perhaps, but none the less divine and inhuman for that.

I climbed up these steep lanes, I crossed many stiles, waiting, instant after instant, so as to catch some of the far off voices of the owls, until I reached the main road. I turned, I saw with my naked eyes, on this New Year's Eve, the naked crescent moon, in her pure golden curve, virginal, sterile, perilous, delicious. The night was ravishing. She was more ravishing than the night. Now and again purple clouds half veiled her; always she emerged. Did not Verlaine write: "Venus emerges and it is the Night"? Still the owls hooted, still the sea thundered, still the moon emerged and vanished.

I imagined Aristophanes on the Acropolis, on such a New Year's Eve as this, gazing at the crescent moon, hearing the owls hoot in the sombre woods, hearing the loud sea thunder on the rocks, seeing the white foam in the act of scaling the heavens: struck all of the sudden by the wonder of it, struck into some lyrical passion of his own, which, like the vision around him and above him, surged into his imagination, ready to burst out of his lyric lips into exultant songs.

I turn from Aristophanes to Rossetti. "The Cloud Confines" is magnificent, a lyric in verse if not in form, infused with that purely creative genius which won for him the ardent and passionate and affectionate admiration of Swinburne, and in fact Rossetti himself confessed "this *is* my very best thing". In the beat of this imagined rhythm I find the beat, not only of our hearts, but of time the conqueror, but of the past that avoids the mere mention of the future, but of love who is greater and more wonderful than death, but of the sea that is everlasting. The refrain contains our final hope and belief in our immortality:

> We, who say as we go —
> "Strange to think by the way,
> Whatever there is to know,
> That shall we know one day."

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The last stanza reveals all that has been ultimate, all that must always be mysterious and unfathomable.

> The sky leans dumb on the sea,
> Aweary with all its wings;
> And oh! the song the sea sings
> Is dark everlastingly.
> Our past is clean forgot,
> Our present is and is not,
> Our future's a sealed seed-plot,
> And what betwixt them are we?

The only question that requires an answer is: if our past is ever forgotten. On the whole, never; to a certain extent, yes. Those of us who are most lonely live for the day only, and only for what that day and what that night which follows might give to us or might take from us. It is our intolerable memory that recalls the past and nothing else. To those who have loved most passionately, the "backward abysm" is some unequal marriage of heaven and hell: from which rise up unforgetable memories of passions and of penalties, of punishments and of pleasures, of unutterable regrets and of unutterable rejoicings. Only, when I imagine Rossetti alone on certain midnights, it is impossible to conjecture what images of good and of evil might have risen before him. In one letter he reveals something of his brooding imagination, in regard to "Hand and Soul", which he wrote one night in December, 1849, beginning about two a. m. and ending about seven. "In such a case a landscape and sky all unsurmised open gradually in the mind — a sort of spiritual Turner, among whose hills are ranges and in whose waters one strikes out at unknown liberty; but I have found this only in nightlong work, which I have seldom attempted, for it leaves one night broken, and this state was mine when I described the like of it at the close of the story, ah! once again, how long ago!" Still, when he wrote this in 1880, he seems to have forgotten those interminable years when — like certain of us who are still alive — he almost literally turned night into day. For as I wrote:

> When I was living alone in the Temple, the desire of roaming in the streets of London — to get out of myself — myself that has always been so absorbing to me — came over me almost every night, and made work, or thought without work, impossible. The nights in Fountain Court were a continual delight to me. I lived then chiefly by night, and when I came in late I used often to sit on the bench under the trees, where no one else ever sat at those hours. Baudelaire's phrase "a bath of multitude" seemed to have been made for me, and I suppose for five years or so — when I was not abroad — all the first part of the time when I was living in the Temple, I never stayed indoors for the whole of one single evening. There were times when I went out as regularly as clockwork every night on the stroke of eleven.

In "The Card-Dealer" Rossetti creates an atmosphere known only to Coleridge and Blake and to Santa Teresa, and to San Juan de la Cruz, whose poetry is metaphysical fire, a sort of white heat in which the abstract, the almost negative, becomes ecstatically realized by the senses. Just as to Rossetti there were four passions that ruled the whole of his existence: poetry, painting, mediæval mysticism, and woman — no one knows how passionate and how deep had been his interest in all these! — so in San Juan's mystical verse which aches (as Rossetti's never ached) with desire and with all the subtlety of desire sanctified to divine uses, they do but swing a more odorous incense, in censers of more elaborately beaten gold, in the service of a perpetual Mass to the Almighty. As in Santa Teresa personal passion molds individual form, so does the same passion surge

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in the verses of Rossetti; and as some spontaneous and unknown poet of the people — of *el pueblo Español* — makes up his little stanzas of three or four lines because he has something deep within him which hurts him so much to keep in that he is obliged to say it, so, with Rossetti, in "Penumbra", in "Sister Helen", in "Eden Bower", and in "The Card-Dealer", the same passionate ache of desire in his heart hurts him so poignantly that he has to give utterance to the pent up violence of his spiritual sensations. In these stanzas on death he subtilizes on words to such an extent that beyond these words the words of other poets might well have fainted by the way.

Can you not drink her gaze like wine?
  Yet though its splendour swoon
Into the silence languidly,
  As a tune into a tune,
Those eyes unravel the coiled night
  And know the stars at noon.

Notice the unerring instinct by which Rossetti gives to death who deals the cards of life and death an absolute inhumanity: he deliberately inhumanizes death, as he reverses the actual sense of vision, seeing that her eyes can seize on the occult significance of the stars only at noon when to all human eyes they are unseen. Again, observe his touch of frozen fire in these lines:

And not more lightly or more true
  Fall there the dancers' feet
Than fall her cards on the bright board
  As 'twere an heart that beat.

On her fingers are green rings; no man, nor woman either, knows the game she plays; we know certain of her cards: the heart, the diamond, the club, the spade; we know that these feed on our lives as vampires that suck their victims' blood; all that remains for us to know — if such knowledge be ever given to us — is this:

But 'tis a game she plays with all
  Beneath the sway o' the sun.

In "Penumbra" is unveiled the mysterious disguise of Isis, the pagan goddess of vain desires and of vainer mysteries; and, besides this, the intolerable heat and intense suspense of noontide "when fevers are"; besides this, the fever of love's unrest; besides this, a still more aching sense of what is almost despair — made more wonderful by the intricacy of the metre Rossetti invents — an intricacy like that of intricate music.

So shall the tongues of the sea's foam
(Though many voices therewith come
From drowned hope's home to cry to me,)
Bewail one hour the more, when sea
And wind are one with memory.

"The Woodspurge" is one of his naked confessions, as naked as the elemental air we breathe, as naked as woman's divine nakedness; only with this, another not so intense sense of suspense when he wanders at the wind's will to satiate his vision on some ten weeds. Again grief comes with a waft of his primitive imagination from his heart to his lips.

From perfect grief there need not be
Wisdom or even memory:
One thing then learnt remains to me,—
The woodspurge has a cup of three.

All great poets have sung sad songs, some from memory, some from pain, some from ecstasy: only, in every sad song, there must be some tragic element; if not, the song does not satisfy one's senses. Of all the saddest songs a poet ever wrote "Even to" is the saddest and the most tragical, made out of so trivial a thing as this image:

  But the sea stands spread
As one wall with the flat skies,
Where the lean black craft like flies
  Seem well-nigh stagnated,
  Soon to drop off dead,

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which is in fact so trivial as to be fundamental; the stanzas follow one another with a beat that is neither the heart's beat nor the sea's beat — it is something incommunicable. The emotion that rose to his eyes when he wrote this stanza is so contagious that no one can hear it read without being penetrated with the same emotion: again an emotion derived from what may seem trivial, but which tears at one's fibres like some bars in Wagner's "Tristan and Iseult".

Very like indeed:
Sea and sky, afar, on high,
Sand and strewn seaweed,—
Very like indeed.

"A Death-Parting" has a quality utterly different from Rossetti's other lyrics; yet in its passion there is the same lament, the wind's or the sea's lamentation; only, that bitter and savorless sense, as bitter on one's tongue as wormwood, that the past, the atrocious and passionate past, shall never return. In "Sister Helen" this line

A soul that's lost as mine is lost!

has the same sense of tragedy I find in this stanza:

Mists are heaved and cover the sky;
(The willows wail in the waning light)
O loose your lips, leave space for a sigh,—
They seal my soul, I cannot die.
(With a wind blown day and night.)

When Sister Helen asks of her brother:

Nay now, of the dead what can they say?

so, in the same sense, Marlowe's Faustus, in his death agony, as he feels hell's breath thick as hell's spume upon him, cries on the name of Christ: if only Christ could save him!

See: where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!

His lips have been sealed forever by the kisses of Helen of Troy.

III

I have known what it was in Paris for violent days to pass into violet nights. Here, in Cornwall, there are no violet nights; only, in this seclusion, day merges into night and night into day. Here, as in Spain, I can become spellbound. Rossetti was certainly spellbound and by some unearthly spell when he wrote his miraculous "Love's Nocturn". Haunted and obsessed and possessed by I know not what unimaginable visions, he creates a world no poet ever before created. The heated atmosphere swarms with ghostly shapes and secret images. Stanza follows on stanza, as it were, breathless as it were deathless. Indeed, there is no breathing place between these stanzas. The air is perfumed with oriental spices and with the heavy scent of smoking incense. It is addressed to that "Lord of terrible aspect" who saluted Dante as he bore in his naked hand a burning heart. It is addressed to Eros, who watches over sleepless lovers. In a word, it is a scented whirlwind where one's senses are bewildered: a whirlwind that dances as it sings.

Poets' fancies all are there:
There the elf-girls flood with wings
Valleys full of plaintive air;
There breathe perfumes; there in rings
Whirl the foam-bewildered springs;
Siren there
Winds her dizzy hair and sings.

Half formed visions lead us to death's wicket; his body's fantom — like Blake's in one of his finest poems — wavers in the wind; he, like Dante, bids his master give to his shadow speech and song; another fantom beckons to him from some fragrant

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bed of flowers; the spellbound air becomes more perfumed; his image passes like a shaken flame, his soul shudders at the touch of its breath on the glass. Then, sleep having utterly vanished, he cries for relief:

> Ah! might I, by thy good grace
> Groping in the windy stair,
> (Darkness and the breath of space
> Like loud waters everywhere,)
> Meeting mine own image there
> Face to face
> Send it from that place to her!

LUCRETIUS AND THE MOTION PICTURE

By Pierre Loving

FROM the pages of a recent history of the movies, which I was listlessly examining in the library of a friend, there jumped out at me the startling news that T. Carus Lucretius, the Roman poet, had gone over into the movie camp. For a moment I could hardly believe my eyes. Why, I said, Lucretius has been dead these two thousand years. And even if he were not, what, pray, would he be doing in the movies? Here was something to give one pause, if not to shake one out of the complacency and kudos of the twentieth century.

Then I recalled some of the rumors that were rife in the motion picture studios, and my astonishment was a little mitigated. Homer, so ran one of them, chanted the sea thunder of his Odyssey for the screen; and another was that Virgil, thinking of upholstering his nest against old age, cast a potboiling eye upon future picturization. From this it will be seen that the movies, although a young art, feed and keep alive a body of folk lore that is curiously their own.

Was it only a noble flight of my historian's imagination? Hardly. For please note that he is nowise content with the above astonishing innuendo. Riding high in H. G. Wells's time machine, with lever at the reverse, he runs back twenty centuries and seeks to unearth facts. Lucretius, he says, is responsible for the dawn of the moving picture idea.

Amazing, is it not? A most monstrous indictment to tax anybody with and most of all the gentle Roman poet who, it will be remembered, smeared the bitter brim of philosophy's chalice with the ingratiating honey of sensuous poetry so that you and I, like little children taking their unpalatable medicine, might be persuaded to drink it. But then you will say: Lucretius was mad. So he was. And many will not scruple to hang the whole blame for starting the movies upon his madness, which has already been richly exploited by both commentators and later poets.

The madness of Lucretius was of such a peculiar sort that it deserves an advocate. For madness in an age of reason is an exalted thing. Consider how few possess it — that is, for any appreciable length of time. Most unhinged minds soon dash one's highest hopes to the ground. Either they temporize by taking refuge in a sanatorium or they go over to the enemy's camp altogether, and the world warms to them again, taking them back with open arms and showering them with their lost rights of citizenship, including the right of always voting wrong. Madness, like a taste for persimmons, is often a cultivated appetite or art. It is most to be prized (although the police stay unconvinced) when it is free and footloose. Once it is housebroken, so to speak, the joy of its usufruct is considerably diminished. It

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is said that Lucretius became mad after swallowing a love potion mixed by his jealous wife. Perhaps he welcomed his insanity. The theory is not untenable. Perhaps, after beholding in a vision the conquering grip of the movies on the imagination of millions of people from Greenland to Patagonia, from New York to Vladivostok, he lackadaisically gulped down the draft and forthwith feigned madness. Deliberately, I suspect, he wooed madness and, through madness, tranquillity and death.

The irony of it! Here was a lonely shepherd of the still, twilit fields of thought who only sought to follow in the footprints of his master, Epicurus. By reason of his theories he had drawn down upon himself the harsh sobriquet of infidel, which was particularly cruel in view of the fact that he invoked Venus, the all pervasive impulse in life, to help him write his book. G. B. S., who conceivably may have borrowed his idea of a Life-Force from the Latin poet, has found that it doesn't pay to indite a *præmium* to this demiurge, while prefaces do. It was his tutelary goddess, probably, who lured Lucretius to stumble upon the principle of the movies, at that period lurking unknown in the world. When he discovered it, he decided that the love potion could do him no further hurt. And so he became mad. This loss of mental balance has been embellished and much eked out by poets like Tennyson who, if they borrowed from Lucretius, borrowed nobly as one gentleman might do from another, with no surety of repayment.

But let us not at this late date begin a hue and cry of plagiarism. Let us examine briefly Lucretius's theory itself. To be sure, a theory is but a pale adumbration of the fourth largest industry in the United States. My nimble witted historian, I take it, had in mind the fourth book of "De Rerum Natura" when he fastened the genesis of the movies upon the Latin poet. It may be that one day while reading Lucretius he seemed to see light all of a sudden or he just hazarded a guess — a brilliant guess, it must be admitted. A guess, in fact, that is priceless beyond words like that wonderful mountain Potosi, which Sir Thomas Browne speaks of, whose bowels are raked, not unprofitably, for rich metal.

Lucretius, I gather, held that animate and inanimate objects gave off a sort of filmy death mask or a fine haze of light or a drifting fragrance of color, as it were, which collided with the lenses of the eye and so compelled us to take note of them. In the case of moving objects the films meet and blend. In one place he speaks of the curtains hung over the Roman theatre, fluttering and tinting the persons of the senators and the matrons below. "The hues of the curtains", he says, "dapple these and the more the walls of the theatre are shut in, the more do these objects suffused with the colors of the curtains (the light sifting through) tend to dazzle us with both movement and color."

Thus was the theory. But apart from the theory, what better two reel comedy than the solemn robed senators capering about in all their superadded glory of color! A crazy accordionlike staircase, a custard pie or two — and the picture is ready to be hatched or "shot", whatever the vernacular is. But what of Lucretius while the camera men are "shooting" away for all they are worth? Where is he at this moment? Is he shouting commands with that megaphone at his lips? Not he! He is in hiding somewhere, I fancy, maybe inside that rustic cabin set for a thrilling five reeler.

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Alone, he implores all creative Venus, he squeezes the pale hand of tranquillity to his sinking heart, and is seized with a penetrating nostalgia for beauty and death. And so perhaps, as another poet says of him,

> He denied
> Divinely the divine and died
> Chief poet of the Tiber-side.

When we put down Lucretius's book at last — high thought sweetened with lyric imagery — we cannot help thinking that the motion picture producers all over the world owe him at least the tribute of a memorial urn or granite block. I dare say, when they are fully acquainted with the part Lucretius played in assisting at the birth of the cinema industry, they will not hesitate to do something. Some will, I suppose, burn an electric bulb to his memory in their luxurious shrines. Sufficient enthusiasm might be awakened to dispatch an expedition of savants to Rome for the purpose of exhuming his sacred ashes and so transplant them to New York or Los Angeles or Fort Lee where, by an odd turn in men's affairs, they may be said now properly to belong. A number of directors will wish to have struck a small marble likeness of the Latin poet to preside over the inner sanctum of their studios. Others may hit upon the inspirational idea of distributing photographs of the poet instead of dividends when next stock day comes around. Whatever the producers do, it may be reasonably expected that they will not inscribe the portraits of the gentle Roman poet with the following cloistral lines taken from his great poem:

> Naught sweeter than to hold the tranquil realms
> On high, well bastioned round with wise men's lore,
> Whence to gaze down on other far afield,
> Dazed wayfarers questing a road of life —
> Glimpse day and night men strain with amazing toil
> To climb to dizzy power and grasp the world.

SHELLEY'S GRANDSON AND SOME OTHERS

By Elinor Wylie

ONCE upon a time I lived in a very small English village. It was the most fairy-book place in the world, and I hardly dare go back to England for fear it has changed. Of course it had Yew Cottages and Rose Cottages, and of course those cottages, unlike suburban retreats with similar pretty names, actually had roses and yew trees growing in their gardens. What is more, if they hadn't, it would have been because these things had died of old age and had pansies planted on their graves, and not because the owners of the gardens preferred a monkey's puzzle and a magenta geranium starfish. The cottages had walls of cob and roofs of thatch, and there was a grey church and a green churchyard, and a red and white inn called the Queen's Head. There were sherry glass elms with rooks in them, and a beechwood which was pink and purple in April, and bright holly bushes which were covered with scarlet berries in November. Unfortunately, by Christmas the robins had eaten all the berries, but the robins themselves, hopping about on the snow, did nearly as well. They were small and plump, and their breasts, instead of being the color of the mandarin oranges that you find in the toe of your Christmas stocking, were the color of the very reddest of the lady apples.

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In this village I ate clotted cream, and smelled wallflowers, and drank mead, all for the first time, and the cream and the wallflowers were heavenly, but I am sorry to say the mead was horrible.

In this village there lived a lovely lady who was Andrew Lang's first cousin, and a large middle aged gentleman who was Arthur Hugh Clough's son, and a little old gentleman who was Shelley's grandson. Of course he looked more like Shelley's grandfather. The first two relationships interested me; the third shook the aerial heavens of my mind. Think of it — Shelley's grandson, and I have had tea with him frequently! He was an authentic eagle's feather; a somewhat small and whitish feather, but still Shelley's grandson. He was also Harriet's grandson, and I remember his looking very impish and saying gravely, "You know, in this family we don't think much of Mary." I never dared ask him just how much he thought of Shelley, nor admit the extent of my own worship, for as a grandfather dear Shelley never had much chance.

In this adorable village, Shelley's grandson was almost the only person who cared tuppence for Shelley, Andrew Lang's cousin almost the only person who cared a farthing for Andrew Lang; as for Mr. Clough, to most people he was a far more important person than his father. And as for Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis" — well, well, I'm afraid the unfortunate villagers had never heard of it at all.

But nine miles away, on the outskirts of another and comparatively Brobdingnagian village, there lived a lady of whom everyone had heard. Not only the people in her village, but even the people in ours, were proud of her. When they went over to the other village's pony show in the spring — we had a much better pony show of our own in the summer — they used to point excitedly to her pleasant but quite commonplace villa. No, that isn't fair: it wasn't really a villa, it was "a gentleman's residence" — they call them that in England even when ladies live in them.

Andrew Lang's cousin lived in a small white house full of old silver and lacquer, and potpourri in Lowestoft china bowls. Arthur Hugh Clough's son lived in a long white house full of Morris wallpapers and daffodils and sunshine. Shelley's grandson lived in the most romantic way of all, for his large grey manor house was let to rich and tyrannical strangers, and was therefore full of wickedness and new furniture, while he himself lived in a high yellow plaster house in a dark wood full of birds. But nobody ever pointed to these houses with pride: all that was reserved for the nice red house of the famous lady who lived nine miles away. She was a very successful authoress, and there is much to be said on her side, and that of the admiring villagers. I am told that she wrote extremely well, and after all she did the writing herself and didn't depend on reflected glory, even from W. B. Maxwell. I'm sorry: I wish with all my heart I could say it was Mrs. Barclay; but it wasn't, it was Miss Braddon. I am quite sure she was a most charming person, and very likely she had silver and lacquer and Lowestoft and daffodils and sunshine in her house. She probably had birds; canaries in gilt cages, and thrushes on the shaven lawn. But she didn't live in our fairy village, where nightingales sang in the plumy trees and larks went up from the gorse on the common. And however you look at it, she wasn't Shelley's grandson.

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ROBERTSON NICOLL—EVANGELICAL HUMANIST

By W. Douglas Mackenzie

THE death of Sir William Robertson Nicoll, C.H., D.D., LL.D., at seventy-two years of age, removes from the church life and indeed the public life of Great Britain one of its most powerful and interesting personalities. Small of stature, with a thin voice of light timbre and an Aberdeen accent of strong texture, Nicoll won his way to the front rank of London men of letters by wielding a pen which was not diminutive and writing an English style of singular lucidity, ease, and force. I followed his career from the time when as Free Church minister at Kelso in the Tweed country he began to write on New Testament subjects. One wondered, and sorrowed, when it was announced that he had resigned his charge owing to ill health and had gone to London to become editor of "The Expositor", in succession to Samuel Cox. And still more did one wonder and hope when Hodder and Stoughton announced that Nicoll would launch and edit for them "The British Weekly". The very name was daring and lent itself to various jibes. But, after a rough year or two, it secured a safe circulation. An Edinburgh publisher told me that the "turn" came when Nicoll secured a serial story from Annie Swan who was then in the first height of her popularity.

Nicoll's skill and power appeared not merely in his selection of contributors, but still more in his own columns, especially the front page editorial and the famous letters of "Claudius Clear". In the former for many years he gave himself to the discussion of devotional and theological topics. The articles were strongly evangelical, but written with such charm of style, with such wide knowledge of literature and such familiarity with religious scholarship, that they at once took front rank in English religious journalism. I was told by the Reverend Frederick Relton, a well known Church of England rector in London, that he took in "The British Weekly" for the sake of its editorial. On the inside pages, signing himself "Claudius Clear", Nicoll appeared as the man of letters and soon revealed a knowledge of English nineteenth century literature and journalism which could hardly be rivaled by any other man. His memory for details of the most obscure kind in the history of periodicals published all over England and Scotland was simply astounding.

Nicoll was fortunate in being backed by a firm of publishers who believed in him and allowed him to lead them into wider fields than they had hitherto explored. One series of volumes after another was launched under his editorship, all of which contained some of the most famous contributions made in the last generation to theological literature. Thus for "The Expositor's Bible" he may be said to have discovered such men as George

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Adam Smith and James Denney and to have given a wider audience to other older men who were already well known as scholars and authors, like Marcus Dods and A. B. Bruce.

Robertson Nicoll was in a certain sense a hero worshiper. But his heroes belonged to many different fields of life. Among those whom he most admired were the great masters of the pulpit. Here we must specially name those whom "The British Weekly" for many years kept steadily before the eyes of the British public, such as Joseph Parker, Alexander McLaren, Alexander Whyte, and many others.

Through all these years Nicoll continued his editorship of the well known monthly magazine of biblical scholarship, "The Expositor". Here he constantly kept an open door for all earnest and scholarly work in the general field of biblical science. Himself well grounded in the historical method of treating the Old and New Testaments, he welcomed without fear every earnest investigation into the origin and teaching of the Sacred Scriptures. He had no place for mere arbitrary radicalism, but he allowed no contributions to enter his pages which were of a merely obscurantist type. The volumes of this great review contain many articles which have proved of immense importance, and the general effect of the whole series of volumes has been to establish confidence in the method of higher criticism when it is employed with reverence as well as with courage. Many important books by Sir William M. Ramsay, Rendel Harris, A. E. Garvie, and others had their origin in these pages.

Through "The British Weekly" and the enormous number of works which he edited, and through "The Expositor", Robertson Nicoll set his mark upon the history of evangelical scholarship and evangelical preaching in Great Britain during the last generation. It is not too much to say that he had a great opportunity in revealing Scottish Presbyterianism and British Noncomformity to the surprised gaze of English churchmen. The whole attitude of Anglican scholars toward the leaders and scholars of other branches of the Church has changed in a most remarkable degree. No one who remembers the ecclesiastical atmosphere of England forty years ago could fail to see how even before the war that atmosphere had been transformed. I have no hesitation in naming among the chief influences which have wrought that change the editorial enterprise, the fundamental scholarship, the warm evangelical devotion, and the wide intellectual outlook of Robertson Nicoll.

I have already indicated that Nicoll was not only a scholar and theologian and lover of preachers, but that he was also a man of letters. People still live and probably will always be found who are uncomfortable at any outward reconciliation of heaven and earth; of the world, technically so called, and the life of the spirit. To such minds it seems difficult to imagine how a man could be so deeply interested in the very heart and essence of the evangelical faith — as Nicoll displayed his interest in certain columns of his paper — and yet reveal apparently an equal interest and learning and skill in the field of pure literature. It was not easy for some minds to see any inward harmony between the front page editorial — so devout, so convinced of the Christian faith, so passionate in its pleading with the human conscience — and the letters of Claudius Clear in

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the middle of the paper, with their happy interest in biography, and learned discussions of poetry, fiction, and journalism. Here he was apparently a man of letters and nothing else. He more than once referred to a famous essay of John Foster, for whom he had a great admiration — the famous essay in which Foster discusses the problem "Why the Evangelical Faith is displeasing to men of cultivation". Whether Nicoll was ever able to discuss the subject systematically or not, at any rate his whole career was a consistent exposure of the fallacy that there is any inward hostility between even the Pauline faith and a living interest in every form of literature. Rather should I say that there was no felt inconsistency in Nicoll's enthusiastic devotion to both. He had learned early in life to stand unabashed

> Before antiquity and stedfast truth
> And strong book-mindedness.

It is a historical fact that Nicoll's literary page in "The British Weekly", including the letters of Claudius Clear and the paragraphs from a Man of Kent, encouraged him to launch upon another journalistic enterprise in the foundation of the famous English monthly periodical called "The Bookman". A publisher friend of mine in London told me many years ago that Robertson Nicoll had become a kind of king in Fleet Street.

In all his editorial work in the literary field Nicoll displayed a catholicity of taste and interest which was both sincere and genuine, and also wise and skilful. I have already said that his chief interests seem to have been in biography, poetry, fiction, and journalism. One might illustrate that interest in many ways. Suffice it to say that his extraordinary knowledge of nineteenth century periodicals, even in obscure provincial regions, combined with his forty years of life in London, led him to write constantly and with enthusiasm of the personalities who have moved in that great world of journalism during the last fifty years. The uncertainties and frequent tragedies of the journalistic career drew out his sympathy, and many generous and kindly words of his must have brought courage and comfort to his fellow workers.

I remember the remark of a friend, that Nicoll seemed more at home among the minor poets than among the giants. He knew the great men no doubt, but reference to them or quotations from them did not fall from his pen so often as might have been expected. Perhaps he relished the pleasure and surprise which his readers derived from his frequent citations of the words or opinions of the men and women of the second and third rank. But he did write often of Sir Walter Scott and Dickens. Some will remember the prolonged discussion which he stimulated on the probable conclusion of Dickens's last and unfinished story, "Edwin Drood". Also many columns were given by him to the praise of "Mark Rutherford". He followed the almost endless biographical revelations and critical discussions concerning the Brontës with minute and intense delight. And "Claudius Clear" was unwearying in his pursuit of every fresh fact and new view propounded concerning such men as Meredith, Fitzgerald, Swinburne, Watts-Dunton, and others who were at the height of their power when he was entering on his career.

It must not be forgotten that he was among the first to recognize the genius of his great friend Sir James Barrie, and that among the early tri-

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umphs of "The British Weekly" was the publication as a serial of "When a Man's Single". And there is the famous story of his making rather than discovering John Watson, whom he compelled to write and rewrite short stories which were all rejected until at last "Ian Maclaren" produced the first chapters of "The Bonnie Brier Bush".

No account of Robertson Nicoll and "The British Weekly" would be complete or fair which did not record the singular part played in his editorial work by a remarkable woman, Jane T. Stoddart. Known in the columns of that weekly as "Lorna" and "J. T. S.", this strong personality made herself felt from the early days in many columns of varied, energetic, and often charming contributions. Miss Stoddart has published many volumes. Some of them rest on minute and learned historical research, in fields so diverse as France in the seventeenth century, the German Reformation, and modern socialistic theory. But in "The British Weekly" she has appeared for thiry years as the diligent "taster" of sermons, political speeches, evangelistic missions, and the skilful, genial interviewer of all kinds of visitors to London and prominent men and women in church and state. As collaborator with Nicoll in his many series of biblical and theological works, and in the columns of his periodicals, her name will be forever associated with him, among those who know. It has been a joint productive partnership in fields of scholarship and literature, of earnest political discussion, of high souled Christian influence. "Honor to whom honor."

Nicoll must have passed away, like all men of ambition and conscious power, with some unfulfilled and lofty dreams. He described one of his dearest ambitions to me one fascinating evening in his hotel at Bordighera, where we were both recruiting for some weeks. It was no less than a history of British religious thought in the nineteenth century. The scale of his proposed work was colossal, too much for a man of so many responsibilities. He said that he had got a certain length with one of the many volumes which would be required, and he sketched the plan of that volume so far as it was to deal with Frederick Denison Maurice. The plan was not merely to describe the personality and writings of Maurice, but to take each work and successive phase of his career as these were reflected in the periodicals of his day, to summarize the whole vast field of controversial discussion to which Maurice's writings gave rise! That was his conception of a true and full description of religious thought in that period. Obviously he ought to have had a corps of coworkers provided to carry out an enterprise so wide and complex as that.

Nicoll was not without many proofs of a successful life. He saw most of his undertakings triumphantly fulfilled. He had honor from King Edward in his knighthood, and from King George when he was made a member of the new order of distinction as a "Companion of Honor" (C.H.). Of course he had his critics. In every direction there were those who differed violently from his opinions and resented some of his journalistic methods. He was blamed for "running" certain names, advertising certain institutions, harping on certain themes. But his defense is easy. He found in these methods part of the secret of his success. His journals had a personal character which

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aroused interest, quickened discussion, even made history. He well knew the risk he ran when he deliberately used his famous front page editorial and following paragraphs for the exposition and defense of his political views. Here too he might say that success confirmed the wisdom of that policy. For it is well known that the leading statesmen of the day discovered that they must reckon with the keen insight, vivid writing, and persistent Christian idealism of this religious newspaper.

Robertson Nicoll filled a large place in the religious and literary life of England for nearly forty years. His fame will endure even when the grateful readers of his own generation have passed away.

THE STRANGE COMPANION

By Malcolm Cowley

THERE is a man of fire and straw
consumed with fire, whom first I saw
once at a dance when nearer and nearer
there swirled a mist and lights grew dim
and I came face to face with him
outlined against me in a mirror
hostilely staring from a mirror.

As red as wine, as white as wine
his face which is not and is mine
which apes my face's pantomime
— he makes a forward movement, halts
and orchestras in perfect time
continue "The Blue Danube Waltz"
die metrically to a waltz.

He makes a movement and retires
this man of straw and many fires
Iago doubled with Othello
often I startle up in bed
to find him lying there my fellow
often I wish that he were dead
and hack him often skin and bone
and dreaming often hear my own
life's blood drip on the crumpled pillow
where once immortal as a stone
true love lay strangled by Othello.

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THE LONDONER

The Season--"Sweet Pepper" and "Men Like Gods"--Dr. Henry Bradley--Ethel M. Dell and the Countryside--Walpole's Lectures--Gardiner vs. Guedalla--"The Adelphi"--"The Gramophone"--Max Beerbohm--An Exhibition of Printed Books.

LONDON, *June* 1, 1923.

LIKE all other publishing seasons of recent years, the spring season of 1923 has been decidedly uninteresting. If one looks through a literary periodical such as "The Times Literary Supplement", it is difficult to discover a new book which by common consent has risen above the general level. Books which have enjoyed a considerable "press" have ceased to invite readers within a very short time. Their sales have stopped; and their publishers have continued to advertise more because they have no other books of note to take the place of the recent successes, which accordingly have persisted dismally in the lists without increasing their apparent circulation. Mr. Gardiner's "Life of Sir William Harcourt" has been read by all who are interested in politics, and I find that even in confidential conversation readers have praised the book. This is a great compliment to it, for there is more division of public and private opinion over a book of this kind than there is over one of less bulk and tolerant consumption. Various books of last season have continued to find readers — e. g. the Letters of Mr. Page. This is definitely established here as an exceedingly well handled piece of editing, and as the revelation of a remarkable personality. Another book which I think has stood the test of much critical reading is F. J. Harvey Darton's loving study of Wessex — the fruit of twenty years' study. Among novels, I should say that the two which have stirred most attention are Wells's "Men Like Gods" and a novel called "Sweet Pepper" by Geoffrey Dennis. The latter owes much to its topical theme — that of a young woman who turns prostitute for a time in order to acquire wealth for a definite end— but even so the author's capacity has aroused respect. His future work will certainly receive a great deal of notice. As for Wells's book, it has created much diversity of opinion. I have heard it condemned as a mediocre rehash of old ideas of this author. But I have also heard it welcomed as a genuine revival in Wells's power to write a novel which nobody else could have written. One great point the book unquestionably has, and it is that by using easily recognizable real men and women as its protagonists it has carried the Utopian novel to a point of verisimilitude not hitherto attained or even attempted in this genre of fiction. That is to say, Wells has put a man like Lord Beaverbrook into the midst of an ideal state, and has thereby sharpened and heightened the dramatic contrast between the world we know and the world of a dream. I am told that "Men Like Gods" has not received the attention in America which it has certainly enjoyed here;

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and I can only assume, if this is the case, that the figures introduced have a merely local or national significance. When we say here, for example, "Lord Beaverbrook", we imply a whole series of acts by which Lord Beaverbrook is publicly known. We think of him as the owner and controller of the "Daily Express", as a man very much behind the scenes in Tory politics, as, in fact, the prime mover in some recent political crises. And when I personally think of Lord Beaverbrook's appearance in "Men Like Gods" I cannot help recalling the last time I saw the noble lord. He was sitting at about five removes from me at a public dinner, and his next door neighbor was H. G. Wells. The book had then been written; but it had not been published. It is impossible, in my opinion, really to exaggerate the importance of "Men Like Gods". Just think of the degree of immunity from direct criticism which those men enjoy who do not present themselves for public attack. They are behind the scenes, and everybody knows they are there; but fear or convention prevents journalists from public criticism of their unidentified actions. They are there, they may be doing good or causing mischief, but only those equally behind the scenes have any inkling of the power they wield. Now Wells is more behind the scenes than any other novelist in England. By this I do not mean that he is an intriguer; no man, I am sure, is more disinterested than he. He loves truth and loves the human race (as few writers love the human race), and while he is often rendered inaccurate in his representations and even in his general perceptions by a sort of irascible petulance of judgment, it should never be forgotten that he is one of the most outstanding men in England. He knows better what is being done than any other man who uses the novel form for the conveyance of his ideas about life. He is an ardent propagandist, an education "fan", a most vivacious generalizer; but he cannot be explained away as a negligible force. Therefore those who have not thought as highly as they might have done of "Men Like Gods" should look at the book again, with the knowledge that its positive proposals of a sanitary Utopia are not the only things of moment in the book. One notable item is such direct criticism of prominent personalities and of the ideas and interests they represent as no other living English writer would dare to print. The criticisms, that is to say, are in the idiom of reality. They are not the hollow mouthings of more than one of our young novelists; they are the pungent and merciless displays of one who gets his political information at first hand.

* * * *

A great loss — I know that this is a conventional phrase which has lost much of its meaning, but it is in this case a literal truth — has been sustained by English scholarship in the death of Dr. Henry Bradley. Dr. Bradley was such a modest man that he was the most modest man I ever met. He was like a mouse. I will tell you one thing. I once went years ago, as an obscure youth, to his home, in order to be present at a large and happy ceremonial function — to nothing more nor less than a wedding. I knew almost none of those present. It was a large party, and all were very bright and happy and unaffectedly boisterous. There was much chatter and gaiety. Guests stood or sat here and there, laughing, very much at their ease, all, as it were, at

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a family party. Only I, through no inhumanity, but from a constitutional shyness which has been too little remarked by my personal critics, stood apart from the festivity. I looked on, a little moved and sad at so much happiness in which I had only a watching part. And presently I found a similarly shy, elderly man, with a large grey beard, and the mildest, kindest eyes half hidden behind spectacles, addressing me. He invited me to step out of doors and walk with him in the garden, and there we had a modest, low toned conversation in which I was put entirely at ease and made to feel that I had a rightful place not only upon earth but in this assembly. The shy, elderly man, I need hardly say, was Dr. Bradley. More, he knew my name, my books, my inclinations. It was a rare exhibition of tact and understanding. And that, I think, was very characteristic of Dr. Bradley. In this conversation and the two others I had with him I felt that he loved knowledge with all his heart, and sought knowledge with that inexhaustible patience and capacity for assimilation which only great men can command. He was modest before knowledge. But also — and this is a quality yet more rare — he was modest before men. The most modest, and the most learned, man I ever met. I have met only one other great man as unaffectedly cordial in his courtesy to an entire stranger — and that man is George Bernard Shaw. In Mr. Shaw also there is a politeness which, for all its owner's subsequently revealed egotism, shows the man to be unfeignedly modest and instinctively gracious.

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I have recently had an experience of the consequences of true fame. This experience, I must hasten to add, does not relate to myself, although I also have experienced compliment in receiving a copy of Mr. Johnny Weaver's new book, "Finders", with my name handsomely inscribed therein by the author. No: to leave Mr. Weaver for the moment, let me get to my anecdote. Possibly the most popular novelist in England at the present time — ousting Miss Corelli, Mrs. Barclay, and other best sellers of other days — is Ethel M. Dell. Miss Dell married some time back; but she is still Miss Dell to us all. And this lady and her husband have recently taken a house in a certain Surrey village. It has been the talk of the countryside. Simultaneously with this sensation has occurred the commencement in "The People" of the serial version of Miss Dell's "Greatheart". Will it be believed that every house in the district five miles round the author's new home bought "The People" for the first instalment of "Greatheart"? Regular subscribers of the paper failed to get their copies owing to the demand; but no one of them remarked to me, "Mrs —— (next door) got one; and I'm going to *make* her lend it to me." I have heard of one author whose movements from one place to another invariably create sales for his books; but Miss Dell's revenue must be increased tremendously with every change of address. Could not some popular author "settle" for a time in every part of England? It would be a roving life, but at the end of five years, if the tour were properly directed, the results might be fabulous. Meanwhile, I have heard of one English novelist who refuses to allow cheap editions of her novels to be published on the ground that poor people in remote villages actually set aside a penny a week from their miserable earnings upon purpose to

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buy her books in the original editions. It just shows what a passion for literature exists in the English countryside. If we had a Pond or a Keedick here to open up the lecture platform, what might not be done! English lecturers could almost stay at home and do their work in the British Isles. Americans, even, might make profitable visits to these shores, and in this way retaliate upon those English writers who have toured America. The Sitwells, who are presenting on June 12 in the West End a new and original form of entertainment called "Façade", might extend their work from London to the Provinces. Here is a vast untilled field. Perhaps it has already attracted the attention of Mr. Pond, who, I hear, is due in London within the next few days.

* * * *

Talking of lectures reminds me that I have just heard from Hugh Walpole, who expects to be back in London again by July 1. He has had a splendid time in the United States, and is looking forward to having a splendid time in England. He has delivered very nearly two hundred lectures in America. Such a feat would be beyond the physical capacity of most men; but for Walpole it is so much happy exercise. He, I take it, is one of the comparatively few European writers who "make good" as lecturers in America. For one thing, he loves lecturing. He has the large heart and the earnest, persuasive enthusiasm which put him at once in touch with an audience. Having heard him lecture in England, I know that he is immediately popular, that he is unaffected, not at all patronizing, but very human and direct. I should suppose that his audiences see in Walpole less the lecturer than the friend; and this in itself would be enough to show how excellent in every way his lectures must be. I wish I had Walpole's gift. When I come to America I shall not lecture. I once lectured in London, with Walpole in the chair; and Walpole put everybody in a good humor with me by opening his introductory remarks with the words: "Ladies and Gentlemen. So far as I know, Mr. Pure knows nothing about the subject upon which he is going to speak." What wonder, therefore, that when he espied me some time later at a meeting which he was about to address, he was aware of some qualms. Nevertheless, he did well, and he kept to the point throughout.

* * * *

Lecturer and counter lecturer upon biography — in the series of lectures and counter lectures about which I wrote the other month — are to be A. G. Gardiner and Philip Guedalla, Mr. Asquith in the chair. In this case I believe there has been that degree of communication between the lecturers which should lead to something more nearly approaching a genuine clash of opinion than was the case at the opening meeting — between H. G. Wells and E. B. Osborn. I did not hear the debate upon the theatre between St. John Ervine and C. B. Cochran; but I gather that Ervine must have been characteristically provocative, from the fact that Dennis Eadie, one of our leading actor producers, has been writing indignantly to the papers denouncing Ervine as a Jeremiah. There has been a sharp scuffle in the "Observer", but Mr. Eadie is an ineffective controversialist because he cannot command a pungent fighting style. His was rather the windmill action of the small boy in a fight. He was angry, and temper is half the battle in a row of this sort. I should not care to en-

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gage Ervine in angry controversy myself, though I am hardier with words than Mr. Eadie.

* * * *

Once upon a time there was a rumpus of some sort—I have forgotten the occasion — between Ervine and Middleton Murry. There was a great deal of dust. Both combatants survived. Murry has survived to the exten of launching a new monthly, "The Adelphi", which makes its first appearance today. It is a periodical which many Americans will be glad to possess, and I think they should look out for it. The first number contains a portrait of Katherine Mansfield which is startingly like. There are also miscellaneous literary contributions by D. H. Lawrence, H. M. Tomlinson, Katherine Mansfield; with shorter notes by Arnold Bennett, H. G. Wells, and others. I may be prejudiced, but the thing in the number which most interested me was Bennett's account of the first night of Holst's opera, "The Perfect Fool". Otherwise, the number had some lack of homogeneity. Upon too many pages one caught the name "H. G. Wells", either as the writer or the subject of a review, or merely as an illustrative term. This gives the paper the air of being a Wells organ, which is unjust to Wells and to "The Adelphi". Moreover, some of the paragraphs at the end of the number look as though they were there to fill space — always an unsatisfactory impression. But on the other hand, there is plenty of enthusiasm behind "The Adelphi" — plenty of that spirit of the search for truth which may make it a real contribution to periodical literature. We need something of the kind, for an idealistic journal which can be read is sadly lacking. There is nothing (so far as I know) in existence which is quite like "The Adelphi". Its aim is to band together writers who believe in life as a real experience and who have ideas about it which *demand* expression. I hope "The Adelphi" will find such writers in plenty, so that its pages in future numbers may be overflowing with good and courageous things.

* * * *

Another new periodical, of which I spoke as imminent the other month, "The Gramophone", has now reached me. Judging by the tone of the magazine and the fluid vitality of its general composition, I should say that this was decidedly a work for collectors of Compton Mackenzie. At first sight "The Gramophone" looks like the work of amateurs; like "The Adelphi" it contains paragraphs which look as though they were there to fill up space. And some of the reports of club meetings are exceedingly amusing. I had the impression at first that the paper was a joke. But "dig a little deeper", and there is evident not only the author's wayward yet enchanting personality in complete action, but also the working of a wide and enthusiastic experience of gramophones and gramophone music. There is no doubt that for many people (I candidly include myself) the gramophone provides music at times and in places when music (otherwise unobtainable) is a necessity of life. The mechanism which so offends the fastidious may be forgotten by all who choose to obliterate it from their consciousness. Machines, needles, and records are so greatly improved that the cult of the gramophone is really extending beyond one's hated neighbors. And there is no paper which gives a clear lead to the gramophonist. "The Gramophone" supplies the want. It does this in a cheeky, flamboyant,

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undergraduate manner. It is candid, full of Mackenzian quips and cranks. But it has a solid core of usefulness. It tells owners of gramophones what records are good and what are less good. It lists records and criticizes them. Above all, it explains what records are severely "cut". This is one of the terrors of the gramophone user. I have a version of Chopin's "Ballade in A Flat", for example, played by Pachmann, which omits the first half of the ballade. It is exasperating. Now if we have a paper which protects us from buying records where there is defect in rendering or recording, or where there has been savage "cutting", we shall do very well. I applaud "The Gramophone". It has its utility. But it also has its amusing and personal interest as speaking as consistently with the voice of Mackenzie as "The Mask" spoke with the voice of Gordon Craig.

* * * *

Max Beerbohm's new collection of cartoons and caricatures is on view here. Certain of the subjects — the King and Prince of Wales — have been treated in a manner to discompose the circumspect. They have been withdrawn from exhibition, and are thus sooner in the hands of their purchasers than had been expected. But the withdrawal has much tantalized those who — like myself — were at a distance from London at the time of the opening of the exhibition. Meanwhile — although that, I am sure, was very far from the intention of Max Beerbohm and the exhibitors — the show has had much advertisement as the result of the protests.

Another exhibition in which personally I have found greater interest is the really absorbing selection of modern printed books which is on show this month at the galleries of the Medici Society. This is a model of what such an exhibition should be. Although a large proportion of the books shown are English in origin, America and the European nations have their handsome and illuminating examples equally well displayed. The catalogue, moreover, is an admirable piece of work. The object of the exhibition is "to demonstrate the high standard of craftsmanship attained in books produced under the ordinary conditions of commerce". I must admit that I was astounded at the success with which the selectors have proved their case. Very few of the exhibits fail to show genuine taste. Most of them are beautiful. Such an exhibition is very encouraging to all who care about the artistic production of books. The types, the pages, the machining, and the paper in practically every case suggest that book production has assumed its true place among the cares of publishers. And it is not as though the exhibits were chosen from among the productions of very few houses: the publishers are representative. A few more such exhibitions, a little more demonstration that it is no more costly to produce a book that is pleasant to the eye and the hand, and we should have a book trade approaching the ideal. Booksellers would become educated. They would prefer to sell handsome and elegant books. The public would become educated. It would prefer to buy books of beauty. The ugly, stupid book would disappear. Behold the millennium!

SIMON PURE

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THE POEMS OF THE MONTH

Selected by Babette Deutsch

FOR the most part the verse in the May magazines seems to fall between the two stools of technical competence and emotional content. It sits firmly on neither. The poet who signally achieves both values is Winifred Welles, a young woman whose work is distinguished by its rare blend of austerity and richness. Here is her "Moors", appearing in "The New Republic":

MOORS

Thin landlord of a scattering estate,
The sea's soil is the one I understand.
There is in me no steamy loam of land,
Compacted for one purpose, love or hate.
But particles that will not integrate,
That slip, minute Saharas, from the hand,
Grained to disperse — in such uneasy sand
My mind confronts its own most colorless trait.

Few are the vagabonds whose gray shoes bless
My blurred roads leading nowhere — save the sea —
Yet, in my weedy shade, those few will stay
Whole summers long, and take deep breaths of me,
As if to drink my thirst, and carry away
Sweet-smelling armfuls of my dreariness.

Winifred Welles
—*The New Republic*

The same periodical indulges in two other quotable poems, both, like Miss Welles's "Moors", concerning themselves with the natural world of which man is the mere casual observer. This choice of theme is expected of Robert Frost, and one expects of him, perhaps, a stricter terseness than he has achieved in his still charming "Our Singing Strength".

OUR SINGING STRENGTH

It snowed in spring on earth so dry and warm
The flakes could find no landing place to form.
Hordes spent themselves to make it wet and cold,
And still they failed of any lasting hold.
They made no white impression on the black.
They disappeared as if earth sent them back.
Not till from separate flakes they changed at night
To almost strips and tapes of ragged white
Did grass and garden round confess it snowed,
And all go back to winter but the road.
Next day the scene was piled and puffed and dead.
The grass lay flattened under one great tread.
Borne down until the end almost took root,
The rangey bough anticipated fruit
With snow-balls cupped in every opening bud.
The road alone maintained itself in mud,
Whatever its secret was of greater heat
From inward fires or brush of passing feet.

In spring more mortal singers than belong
To any one place cover us with song.
Thrush, bluebird, blackbird, sparrow and robin throng;
Some to go further north to Hudson's Bay,
Some that have come too far north back away,
Really a very few to build and stay.
Now was seen how these liked belated snow.
The fields had nowhere left for them to go;
They'd soon exhausted all there was in flying;
The trees they'd had enough of with once trying
And setting off their heavy powder load.
They could find nothing open but the road.
So there they let their lives be narrowed in
By thousands the bad weather made akin.
The road became a channel running flocks
Of glossy birds like ripples over rocks.
I drove them underfoot in bits of flight
That kept the ground, almost disputing right
Of way with me from apathy of wing,
A talking twitter all they had to sing.
A few I must have driven to despair
Made quick asides, but having done in air

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A whir among white branches great and small
As in some too much carven marble hall
Where one false wing beat would have brought down all,
Came tamely back in front of me the Drover
To suffer the same driven nightmare over.
One such storm in a lifetime couldn't teach them
That back behind pursuit it couldn't reach them;
None flew behind me to be let alone.

Well, something for a snowstorm to have shown
The country's singing strength thus brought together,
That though repressed and moody with the weather,
Was none the less there ready to be freed
And sing the wild flowers up from root and seed.

Robert Frost
—*The New Republic*

Joseph Auslander uses a free rhythm for his "In Envy of Cows", a poem which exhibits his wonted awareness of the tone-color of words.

IN ENVY OF COWS

The cow swings her head in a deep drowsy half-circle to and over
Flank and shoulder, lunging
At flies; then fragrantly plunging
Down at the web-washed grass and the golden clover,
Wrenching sideways to get the full tingle; with one warm nudge,
One somnolent wide smudge
Sacred to kine,
Crushing a murmurous afternoon of late lush August to wine!

The sky is even water-tone behind suave poplar trees —
Color of glass; the cows
Occasionally arouse
That color, disturb the pellucid cool poplar frieze
With beauty of motion slow and succinct like some grave privilege
Fulfilled. They taste the edge
Of August, they need
No more: they have rose vapors, flushed silence, pulpy milkweed.

Joseph Auslander
—*The New Republic*

This month brings two interesting things by Miss Millay. "The Concert", appearing in "Poetry", expresses the mood of a music lover who happens to be a lover as well, and catches the moment of conflict in a net of beautifully woven words. I quote "To a Dying Man" ("Vanity Fair") instead, not because it is the better poem, but because its sestet is so admirably and memorably done.

TO A DYING MAN

Your face is like a chamber where a king
Dies of his wounds, untended and alone,
Stifling with courteous gesture the crude moan
That speaks too loud of mortal perishing,
Rising on elbow in the dark to sing
Some rhyme now out of season but well known
In days when banners in his face were blown
And every woman had a rose to fling.

I know that through your eyes which look on me
Who stand regarding you with pitiful breath,
You see beyond the moment's pause, you see
The sunny sky, the skimming bird beneath,
And, fronting on your windows hopelessly,
Black in the noon, the broad estates of Death.

Edna St. Vincent Millay
—*Vanity Fair*

And finally, I should quote, had it not appeared in THE BOOKMAN, "The Bully", one of Robert J. Roe's neat bits of impressionism called "The Lettish Sailor Speaks".

There are several things among the May poems which are less provocative than those quoted, but yet have points of excellence. Genevieve Taggard's "Outer Circle" in "The Lyric West", for example, so employs an old image as to make it seem strikingly fresh. "The Measure" relieves an exceptionally poor issue with a neat sonnet by Frank Ernest Hill, "Midnight Tenement", and a slight if charming piece by Jeanne d'Orge, called "A Child Much Loved of Poets"; and lastly, "The Dial" publishes an obscure sonnet, "Festoons of Fishes", written by that exquisitely humorous troubadour, Alfred Kreymborg.

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THE LITERARY SPOTLIGHT

XXI: JOHN FARRAR*

With a Caricature by William Gropper

JOHN FARRAR has a quaint and rather creepy capacity for undergoing a gradual but complete metamorphosis before your very eyes. You look, and while you look the lines of his thin, hungry face assume new relations among themselves: what was before an obtuse angle slowly closes to the acute and the straight lines forming it bend at the unjoined ends with the sinuous undulations of an angle worm that has been partially crushed. This metamorphosis is not that swift facility for assuming protective coloration with which we associate the salamander; for Farrar, though outwardly the most socially amenable of party hounds, has actually a most meagre faculty for identifying himself with the moods and manners of a group: it is rather a matter of a painful sensitiveness to disturbing contacts. And most contacts to Farrar are disturbing. What we see, then, is the unconscious performance of a sort of quickchange artist, who foregoes the advantage of a momentary retirement behind a screen. One moment he is a pink cheeked seraph with all three pairs of wings aflutter and at the end of the next moment he is a bent old man, disconsolate and agape at youth. One moment he appears a case of arrested development, with immaturity, even pubescence, soliciting your forbearance and kindly patronage; the next, he is an austere and censorious ascetic frowning his disapproval of gaucheries and frivolities. He is in the course of a single evening, child and birchman, pupil and lecturer, defender and carper, Pierrot and pedant, monk and playboy.

He has a way of clicking his teeth together, compressing his lips, lowering his chin to close proximity with his Adam's apple, and murmuring through his nose an ambiguous and non-committal, "Ooom!" That is about the only time he ever has his mouth closed. Not that he is adenoidal; he isn't; but silent or loquacious, meditative or interested, his mouth is agape. That comes of an almost abnormal inquisitiveness combined with a New England conscience: he is very eager to know, but knowledge very often shocks, irritates, or troubles him; he would learn the bitter or ugly truth but not until it has paid toll to his moral sentiments is that truth allowed to enter his head; he enjoys being aghast at scandalous gossip and is ever on the hunt for it. His mouth opens and stays open in a pained and hurt kind of expression.

I have never known any man, woman, or child who so thoroughly as Farrar constitutes himself his brother's keeper. Farrar assumes a paternal protectorate over every

*EDITOR'S NOTE. — This article was submitted anonymously for the Spotlight series. The editor feels it only fair to the others who have been attacked in these pages to open them to this sketch of himself.

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John Farrar

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friend he has or makes, watching after his friend's health, counseling him in money matters, advising him against the pitfalls of a big city, choosing his acquaintances, censoring his pleasures, defending him against criticism, tooting his horn, giving him a leg up with people of influence, and worrying himself ill lest through some failure in his plans his friend will go to the dogs. I spoke of a paternal protectorate; but Farrar's solicitude is maternal rather, even grandmotherly or perhaps even more accurate still, grandauntly. He is always arranging love matches, furthering courtships, trying to straighten out marital difficulties, reconciling estranged couples, making young poets sign the pledge, trying to distract the sentimental attentions of ingenuous novelists and playwrights away from dangerous women, advising fresh air, wholesome amusements, and hard work against the claims of temptresses, the flesh and the devil.

Let some designing baggage cast a salacious or approving eye at one of Farrar's brood of talent—and they include men old enough to be Farrar's father—and his protective wings spread about his ward, his feathers go up in fear and fight, his countenance brews a thunderous and angry look, and that night he gets no sleep, wondering how he is going to circumvent the evil machinations of the harassing hussy. Let some one of his wayward wards be seen at lunch with a woman not his wife, and Farrar experiences a profound sense of discouragement at his life's work and muses with audible despair upon man's frailties, the decay of virtue, and the treacherous, insistent demands made upon character and moral stamina by the feverish, fretful life of a metropolis.

It is rather difficult to associate this pink cheeked, reddish haired, angular and very young, young man with the moral preoccupations and proclivities of the elder Cato. But there they are, and there's no escaping them. It is, in a way, admirable; and I have no doubt but that, had Farrar not been so vigilant and censorious, any number of young and not so young people would have been sinful, though happy, and would have gone to pieces with a certain degree of uncountenanceable enjoyment. He has saved a lot of people from hell and illicit happiness; he has made them work with that feeling of thwartment which is the mother of all art; and he has laid up his treasures in heaven against the thieves and rust of a corrupting and demimondaine world.

This much must be said for Farrar, whether in consoling reflection that he is not an unmitigated busybody or in criticism of the fleet endurance of the white flame of his reclamatory and directive zeal: he will waste only just so much time on a fellow, and if he proves incorrigible, unamenable to reason, an implacable enemy of his own best interests, a resentful weakling, a consummate rake, and a vain believer in his own ability to regulate his life, Farrar will just simply not bother about him any more. After all, Farrar is the youngest editor of any conspicuous and influential magazine published in English; he is a novelist, a poet, an essayist, a critic, a playwright, a lecturer, a first nighter, a university professor, a before and after dinner speaker, a frequent best man at weddings, an impresario, a club director and organizer, an amateur actor with ability, a pianist, a music composer, a discoverer and encourager of talent, a philanthropist, and a circumspect man about town.

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He can give only so much energy and no more to the saving of souls. He is willing to spend at any time a decent, even more than a decent—a considerable—amount of time and energy in helping any deserving young man to make the most of himself and his abilities. He will go to any reasonable lengths for him: provide him, if necessary, with food and shelter, read his work with critical advice and encouragement, interview editors in his behalf, protect him from the invidious demands of the world, stave off the tempter and the temptress. But if the man shows no sense, no gratitude, no self-respect, no inclination to live a better and more fruitful life, at once an artist and a commendable member of the great social organization, Farrar will, with complete justice, lose interest in his case, give him his ticket to perdition, sigh, frown, run his hand dejectedly through his hair, and have no more worries about him.

I, for one, congratulate Farrar upon his attitude, believing that if once a man of mental maturity has been shown, and encouraged upon, the right path, and he still perversely chooses to follow the wrong and thorny one, it's his own business; life is too short to bother too much about him. Farrar has his own work to do, his own ambitions to realize, his own way to make in the world, his own designs which God has given him the talents to accomplish, and it would not only be a waste of time and energy to worry about such fellows, but would be depriving the world of such literary creation as he has been granted the ability to achieve.

But, you may possibly ask, how does Farrar get that way? how does he assume this prerogative of ethical and social direction? how does one so young acquire wisdom which is so old and experienced? Well, a certain amount of it was innate; Farrar was a prodigy at Yale; he lisped in numbers (and he lisps them still); he had a commanding personality even as a youth and his senior as well as his junior college mates early entertained respect for and deference to his wit, his talent, his energy and his knowledge. He had, even as he has today, a way of impressing you with a definite belief that he could do things expertly well. He had no more than to indicate to an employer that he was, for the moment, at leisure and he was forthwith given any job he had set his mind on having. He who had been a poet, a collegiate actor, playwright, and cheer leader*, got first, I think, a responsible job as a special reporter. He convinced the editor—this pink cheeked seraph who, in becoming serious, can look like Jonathan Edwards or St. John of Patmos—that there were strange and colorful stories to be had for the papers by one with his ability who possessed also the courage to mingle with the more cutthroat and unethical of the lower social strata.

"I ask no more", announced Farrar, "than an opportunity to become friendly with petermen and burglars, hired assassins and bums, sustainers and their déclassé women, yeggs, hopheads, swindlers, harness bulls, crooked cops—the dregs and scum of humanity in the great Cloaca Maxima of a great city. I shall undertake to furnish you with stories to make your hair stand on end, and which will, incidentally, inculcate in the hearts and minds of the young, a respect and liking for sane and wholesome, if less

*The anonymous author here fails in his facts. Mr. Farrar was never a cheer leader.

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colorful, living. Let me choose as friends the lowly and outcast, the sullen and revengeful, the rotters and throat rippers, the sodden, coke-stupefied, and degenerate, and I will bring you news and entertainment, cast in smooth and entrancing words which your respectable householder will read to his young daughter, even if he is a Supreme Court justice, with interest in the matter, disapproval of the acts, and sanction for the writer's sentiments. You will, sir, by hiring me, increase circulation and, what is more important, exercise a salutary effect upon the minds and inclinations of the young."

And so Farrar was hired, with complete later justification of his boast. He likes to tell now how he counts among his best friends men who have committed murders at ten dollars a head and have sandbagged salaried fathers for as little as the price of an evening's meal; he has listened as a pretended accomplice while sinister lychnobites laid plans over a low back barroom table for outlaw depredations involving theft and manslaughter. He has seen, he informs you, iniquity in its most shameless, depraved, and incredible forms; he has gone, in his daring search for news and stories, hand in hand with death; and, as if to round out his adventures, he enlisted in the air service and saw war and life here and abroad with the peeled eyes of disillusion and the calm philosophy of a man who knows that of experience we may have a surfeit, and of waywardness too sickening a sight.

Farrar, who was at Yale when the war broke out, won, within a short space, a first lieutenancy in the air service. His first work was under Colonel Hiram Bingham, the South American explorer, in the department which started the ground schools for active service. Later he toured the country investigating these schools and reporting on them. His first public address of any kind was delivered at Ohio State University before a crowd of rookies. His subject was military discipline. He had, at the time, not even been taught how to drill. His first training and experience as an executive editor came when he was sent overseas in the intelligence department of the air service. He assisted in the editing of confidential bulletins, issued by a huge organization with a publishing plant and with representatives in various war zones. He helped also to gather material for the air service history. It was, however, his experience in the ground schools here and abroad that gave Farrar his initial interest in welfare work, that desire to help young men to acquire a knowledge of themselves and their relations to their fellows, and to develop their highest potentialities. It was an experience, he says, which greyed him spiritually and lent him a seriousness beyond his years.

It would be, then, presumptuous to question Farrar's qualifications as an advisory critic of literature and life. He has known, he tells us, the good and the bad, the saintly and the evil, the dangerous and the safe; and he counsels moderation in literature as he would counsel sanity and moderation in life. That is why he seems, at times, so elderly sagacious. Himself one of the very youngest members of the younger generation, he writes occasionally with the umbrageous impatience of a Dr. Henry van Dyke about the scatterbrain and obstreperous youths. He clings, as to the Rock of Ages, to the valetudinarians of literature, grieving that a devastating wave

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of heedless, reckless, youthful license and looseness is sweeping over the world and threatening home, happiness, and country.

But then, again, Farrar is capable of changing his mind. He is not one of these one track fellows. He is not always a Cato. There is no one, at times, who has more belief in and sympathy with youth, even gay and obstreperous youth. He has, probably, encouraged as much new talent among young men and women as any editor in America. He has a vast, an amazing fund of energy; and no little of it, for all the kidding in the above paragraphs, is devoted without hope of reward or gratitude to the fostering and development of promising work among fledgling poets, novelists, short story writers, essayists, and other artists. He has taken what was once a desuete and uninteresting house organ and made it a lively and interesting magazine, playing up to no clique or cult, fair, intelligent, well informed, steering a clear course between the radicals on the one side and the mossbacks on the other. He is at once a good editor and a good business man, having a regard both for the end and the means to that end of literary development. He has ideas; he is by nature something of an impresario. But, so great is his vital energy that his activities are incredibly numerous. It is difficult to imagine how Farrar finds time to do all the things he does, or, doing them, to carry them off so well.

MOUNTAINS

By Scudder Middleton

THE mountain seems to guard
The land that lies behind,
But I've been on the other side
And know what one can find.

The houses, roads and streets,
The menfolk and the ladies,
Are pretty much the same one meets
In Buffalo or Cadiz.

A mountain can be stern
To human hand and toe —
And on the other side we learn
What we already know.

No mountain have I found
That guards a single thing.
Instead of up, I go around
And take what highways bring.

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TO SEE OR NOT TO SEE

Plays and Motion Pictures of the Month

By John Farrar

PLAYS IN NEW YORK WORTH SEEING

1. ICEBOUND: *This year's Pulitzer Prize play, which is the tragicomic story of a wayward son of a rather disagreeable New England family.*

2. AREN'T WE ALL?: *Cyril Maude and Leslie Howard as father and son give sparkle to a deft but conventional domestic comedy.*

3. ZANDER THE GREAT: *Alice Brady among western bootleggers has a chance to shoot a gun and weep over a child, which she does superlatively well.*

4. MERTON OF THE MOVIES: *The motion picture fan satirized while Glenn Hunter smiles his naïve way into the hearts of the matinée goers.*

5. THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE: *This Shaw melodrama of Puritan days is enlivened by Roland Young's impersonation of General Burgoyne.*

6. SEVENTH HEAVEN: *A fantastic combination of Dickens, Molnar, Hugo, and George Cohan gives us as good a chance to weep as one could wish — with a happy ending. Helen Menken is superb, George Gaul almost as good.*

7. RAIN: *What happened to a South Sea Island missionary when he met Sadie Thompson still seems to interest the large public who are growing admirers of Miss Eagel's acting.*

8. YOU AND I: *Thoroughly American high comedy with the prevailing satirical note.*

9. LITTLE NELLIE KELLY *is still the best musical comedy of the year, with* HELEN OF TROY, NEW YORK *and* ADRIENNE *(both reviewed below) vying for second place.* DEW DROP INN *has Mr. Barton's dancing;* GEORGE WHITE'S SCANDALS OF 1923 *(reviewed below) that of Mr. Patricola.*

LAST night I watched an American audience pretend that it was in a Roman amphitheatre and drive on a beaten and harassed and obviously melting musical comedy chorus to encore after encore of athletic dancing. Each new dancing show brings us a more violent terpsichorean entertainer who manages to bump some portion of the anatomy on the floor with a little faster twist and a little harder bump than his predecessor. Mr. Ziegfeld announces that his "Follies" glorifies the American girl; Mr. Kaufman and Mr. Connelly announce that their "Helen of Troy, New York" glorifies the American laundry. But after studying the musical show in New York City over a period of six months one is forced to the conclusion that what the American public will pay the most money to see is physical perfection and prowess, not necessarily with sexual significance, displayed in the most lavish setting.

From the variety stages of New

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York City, however, it is not fair to draw conclusions concerning the character of the American people. Revues which deal with pet Broadway vices and more or less intimate scandals do not flourish in the provinces. I should not say that this was because of the sophistication of Manhattan. It is a hardened rather than a sophisticated mind that does not cringe from certain of the jokes in "The Passing Show of 1923" or the Ziegfeld "Follies". I'm afraid that part of New York likes to snigger; but it may be said for New York that what it likes best and applauds most by way of humor is the upstanding quality of a Will Rogers or the cleanly dancing of a James Barton.

"Ingenious", one is inclined to remark when considering our musical shows. Yes, ingenious; but on second thought, what an astonishing lack of originality the producers show. With money lavishly bestowed upon them, they look about, seize on an old and banal idea for a song number or steal from one place or another, until New York is amused by the spectacle of two revues with two numbers almost exactly alike — taken, we hear, from Paris sources — and at that neither of them very original. In this respect we owe much to Mr. Balieff's "Chauve-Souris". He has taught us to use our always magnificent vaudeville material a trifle more expertly, with increased artistry.

Three main types of musical show we have. Each produces its variants. Occasionally we create a hybrid that mingles the three; but for the most part this form remains true to type. There is the old-fashioned comic opera, usually adapted from the Viennese. The Shuberts generally contribute two or three of these to the season's score. "Caroline" was the best of this year's crop. A southern war story was made to fit a European score with excellent effect. Perhaps "The Lady in Ermine", which seemed on the whole dull, was a better example; for "Caroline" owed much to the second type, the comedy-drama with music and dancing. This variety, to me, reached its height in "Going Up" which starred Frank Craven several seasons past. The third type is, of course, the revue, with its episodes and song numbers strung together by nothing in particular except, perhaps, the personality of an impresario such as Mr. Ziegfeld, Irving Berlin, or John Murray Anderson.

The first type calls out those who remember "Erminie" and "The Merry Widow" and who enjoy pseudo-classical music sung well. In this type, there is a vogue only for the best.

The comedy-drama with music is for Babbitt in his homey moods. To be truly successful it should include a mother song and a sprinkle of flag waving. It is, therefore, at its very peak when handled by that unerring disciple of Babbittry, George M. Cohan. True, there are no flags, as I remember, in that masterpiece "Little Nellie Kelly"; but there is that heart wringing ballad, "You Remind Me of My Mother", and the entire story is about a policeman and his daughter, which brand of Irish patriotism is quite the same thing for New York City as a Yiddish ballad or the actual red, white and blue of the flag. Frank Craven's "Up She Goes" was a clever idea. "The Gingham Girl" was not without its moments. "Go-Go" had speed and an amazing collection of whirlwind dancers. The Negro revues added a certain tang to chorus dancing and a new tilt of the straw hat. Of this second type I really enjoyed "The Clinging Vine" most thoroughly. "Little Nellie Kelly" was faster. It had, perhaps, a

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wider appeal; but "The Clinging Vine" was intelligent enough to be amusing to the sophisticated, and yet not too subtle to appeal to the mass, which, after all, a musical comedy must do.

The revues stagger me! They sparkle with jewels, they dazzle with colors. They are mirrors of fashion and, I believe, of decadence. The Ziegfeld "Follies" has this year been more successful than ever before. I have seen it many times. Every stag party seems to consider it an essential for the middle of the evening. Each time it has seemed more vulgar and less appealing to the eye. In spots, to be honest, I must admit that it was funny. "The Greenwich Village Follies" had moments of great beauty and also moments of absolute dulness. Savoy and Brennan, artists in vulgarity, amused many. In "Jack and Jill", John Murray Anderson again proved that he was master of light and scene and very slow in his pursuit of the elusive joke. Of the early season revues I liked Irving Berlin's "Music Box Revue" best. It had fewer moments of decadent appeal. It was, in some of its sketches, notably "The Lady in Red", really funnier, and its music was undeniably better. Mr. Berlin, or his assistants, have an amazing faculty of being *mechanical* in their best effects; but this pleases a public that still remembers Barnum with affection.

We come now to the crop of summer shows. "Adrienne" reminds me of the good old days of Montgomery and Stone; a little, too, of "The Spring Maid", which was presented by Mr. Werba some years ago. It is a good spectacle and it is fairly amusing. Here are Billy B. Van and Richard Carle. As a satire on Bahaism or Yogism it is not exactly penetrating; but if you are interested in choruses, I am of the opinion that for variety and perfection of types, you cannot equal the congregation that backs charming Vivienne Segal.

"The Passing Show of 1923" is annoying because it has all the air of having been thrown together carelessly and with no regard for ineptitude. There are one or two funny sketches; but there are four or five pointless ones. While the scenery is lavish, it becomes tinsel when it is compared

THE DRAMA SHELF

"You and I" by Philip Barry (Brentano). Mr. Barry's society comedy reads rather better than it plays — and it plays well.

"Red Bird" by William Ellery Leonard (Huebsch). A simple and noble, if somewhat slow moving study of the Indian.

"Helping Charlie" by V. D. Hyde (Four Seas). Awkward and inexpert one act play.

"The Fairy-Four Leaf" by Carola Bell (Brentano). Rather charmingly conceived out of door plays for girls which fail somewhat in the real child spirit.

"Plays of Gods and Men" by Lord Dunsany (Putnam). The best known of Lord Dunsany's short plays here collected in a volume.

"Plays of Near and Far" by Lord Dunsany (Putnam). In this volume are the grotesque and brilliant "The Flight of the Queen" and the delightfully fantastic "Fame and the Poet" as well as other equally diverse dramas.

"Hell" by Upton Sinclair (Sinclair). Another extraordinary performance from the chaotic and prolific Mr. Sinclair.

"Puppet Plays" by Alfred Kreymborg (Harcourt, Brace). These unusual and charming plays of Kreymborg's come to us in this collection via England.

"Joe, A Hudson Valley Play" by Jane Dransfield (Rhythmus). Drab effective tragedy told with fine simplicity.

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with the rich backgrounds of George White's "Scandals of 1923". True, some of Mr. White's scenes remind one of a cover on "Harper's Bazar"; but this is only natural since there are costumes by the exotic M. Erté. Taken all in all, the "Scandals" is a decadent but a beautiful spectacle. Patricola's dancing is not so subtle as that of James Barton; but it is lustier. Mr. Barton is a sylph, perhaps; Mr. Patricola is a gorgeous rowdy.

Concerning "Helen of Troy, New York" I am puzzled. To readers of THE BOOKMAN I do not hesitate to recommend it. You will find plenty to amuse you; but frankly, I missed in it just the thing that its authors tried not to give it. Here are two young men who are fearfully afraid of sentiment. They have striven to write a crisp satire and endow it with music and dance. They have compromised to the extent of injecting a love story which they have in turn laughed at in their program notes. "In order that future audiences", they write, "may be kept in suspense, those present are earnestly requested not to reveal the solution of the love story." Or again, "Owing to the utter importance of the plot late comers will *positively be seated* at all times during the play." This is well and good. The Yarrow collar man, played with great artistry by Charles Lawrence, is at all times funny; but he is the only consistently funny thing in the show. The constant jump from the serious to the satirical is a difficult leap for any audience. Mr. Cohan accomplishes it magnificently in "Little Nellie Kelly" because he keeps his emotional base sure. The Kaufman and Connelly aggregation who have, wittingly or not, almost directly satirized the "Bluebird cookies" of "The Gingham Girl" in their sneering at business efficiency, have, somehow, forgotten to get hold of their audiences. I hope that I am not right; but I fancy that if this comedy succeeds it will be because of the personalities of Queenie Smith and Helen Ford, together with the dancing, rather than because of the somewhat addled smartness of its usually superlatively smart authors.

"The Antigone" of Sophocles, as produced by Edith Wynne Matthison and Charles Rann Kennedy, under Equity Players auspices, with a chorus of young ladies from the Bennett School of Liberal and Applied Arts, Millbrook, New York, proved conclusively that you cannot make musical comedy of Greek tragedy. "The School for Scandal" as revived by the Players Club was, I suppose, one of the most thoroughly all star casts in history. Even the servants numbered Francis Wilson, Grant Mitchell, and Walter Hampden, who proved that they could move chairs and announce guests with unction, pointing to an excellent profession for the actor out of work. The costumes were beautiful, the individual performances, excellent. John Drew and Ethel Barrymore drew the greatest measure of applause from audiences which were particularly generous with applause. This was fitting and proper.

"Sun Up", a play by Lulu Vollmer, produced at the Provincetown Theatre and received by the critics with sober praise, seemed to us little more than a fairly good Kentucky mountain version of Fanny Hurst's "Humoresque" tricked out with realistic atmosphere. Miss Vollmer undoubtedly has a sense of the theatre. Miss La Verne, who plays the part of a "poor white" mother, was magnificent. On an exceedingly warm evening "Sun Up" did not seem to me to get under way until the final act, which was the one that Heywood

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Broun considers mere claptrap. There is surely no promise of a Eugene O'Neill in Miss Vollmer. She is obvious without ringing true, whereas the obviousness of Eugene O'Neill partakes of the obviousness of Homer.

OUTSTANDING MOTION PICTURES

1. THE COVERED WAGON: *This great story of colonization is an epic of photographic beauty.*

2. THE WHITE ROSE: *An obvious story made beautiful and a trifle sentimental by Mr. Griffith, ably assisted by Mae Marsh. (Reviewed below.)*

IN spite of what might have been the inspiration of the Motion Picture Congress, this has been an unlucky month for the motion picture. Mr. Griffith with his straying ladies, his small town heroes and villains, and his really beautiful photography, sent women away sobbing bitterly from "The White Rose".

A picture brought into town by the same company that produced "Masters of Men", the story by no less a man than the late author of "The Covered Wagon", proved absurdly unreal in detail, bad in direction, photography, and acting. "The Man Next Door" might have been produced five years ago. It is the worst picture boasting itself a feature that I have seen in as many years.

Alfred Lunt in "The Ragged Edge" was excellent. A melodramatic story of China and of recovery from delirium tremens was well handled. Lunt is handsomer in pictures than on the legitimate stage, which is unusual. His love making is slightly puppyish; but from this he will doubtless, in time, recover.

I had not before seen the screen version of "Enemies of Women", from Ibáñez's novel. In some ways it is a distinguished production. The combination of news reel with story reel is most effective in the war periods of the picture. Alma Rubens has large and melting eyes. Lionel Barrymore is an imposing figure on the screen. There are beautiful vistas, there are luxurious moments, there are scenes of vivid drama; but on the whole I wished that Joseph Urban who designed the sets had not chosen to be quite so fond of the heavy, the grandiose, the ornate, for it spoiled what might otherwise have been very nearly as great a motion picture as "The Four Horsemen".

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THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

THE BOOKMAN *will present each month tabloid reviews of a selected list of recent fiction. This section will include also the books most in demand according to the current reports in "Books of the Month", compiled by the R. R. Bowker Company, The Baker and Taylor Company's "Monthly Book Bulletin", and* "THE BOOKMAN'S *Monthly Score". Such books as the editor especially recommends are marked with a star.*

O. HENRY MEMORIAL AWARD PRIZE STORIES OF 1922—*Doubleday, Page.* Irvin Cobb heads a galaxy of story tellers old and new. The collection is supplemented by a list of honorable mentions.

MINGLESTREAMS—Jane Abbott—*Lippincott.* Hammock reading for juvenile adults, but a far seeing stage manager might, by working it over, turn it into a successful light comedy.

WEST OF THE WATER TOWER—Anonymous—*Harper.* A sentimental story disguised by fair realistic reporting.

*BLACK OXEN—Gertrude Atherton—*Boni, Liveright.* This gland regulated tale of sex and society might well have been called, "The Older Generation Grows Younger".

THE SOUL OF ABE LINCOLN—Bernie Babcock—*Lippincott.* A spirited romance of Civil War days pervaded by the kindly spirit of Abraham Lincoln and afire with a lofty patriotism.

THE SCUDDERS—Irving Bacheller—*Macmillan.* A slightly querulous satire on the supposed follies of the mythical younger generation.

THE DIM LANTERN—Temple Bailey—*Penn.* Love in all its pristine sweetness with only such complications as can be sweetly weathered.

THE BOX OF SPIKENARD—Ethel Boileau—*Doran.* Some husbands treat the precious ointment of a woman's love as if it were cold cream to be used after shaving.

THE VILLAGE—Ivan Bunin—*Knopf.* Primarily this is Russian portraiture. The plot is like a mole. One knows it is there by its trail, but it is hardly ever seen.

*ONE OF OURS—Willa Cather—*Knopf.* The western plains and the war afford a young American Hamlet the opportunity to discover his soul and lose his life.

THE DIARY OF A DRUG FIEND—Aleister Crowley—*Dutton.* Well written. Too well written—the first stage is presented so alluringly as to overshadow the after horrors related. As to the salvation offered, only a wealthy addict could afford it.

THE RIDDLE, AND OTHER TALES—Walter de la Mare—*Knopf.* This man is again a magician manipulating adjectives into exquisite and exact service while juggling an abundance of convincing metaphors throughout his almost mystical stories.

THE MASTER BREED—Francis Dickie—*Doran.* A strong, idealistic man meets a strong, idealistic, beautiful woman, captain of her own whaling ship, as ever the twain shall meet.

*THE ENCHANTED APRIL—"Elizabeth"—*Doubleday, Page.* On a warm day when one wants to run away from one's husband, this is a perfect antidote.

FLAMING YOUTH—Warner Fabian—*Boni, Liveright.* An unabashed study of the flapper at her freest, which leaves to the reader the task of pointing a moral.

EXTERIOR TO THE EVIDENCE—J. S. Fletcher—*Knopf.* The stolen papers are cleverly located, but who murdered the old millionaire?

RAMSHACKLE HOUSE—Hulbert Footner—*Doran.* Equal parts of Maryland, young lovers, and a murder mystery make this literary julep.

THE DOOM DEALER—David Fox—*McBride.* Set a thief to catch a thief. So Miss Wyatt doesn't make much of a mistake after all, when she unintentionally engages "The Shadowers" to clear up an interesting mystery.

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THE WOMAN OF THE HORIZON—Gilbert Frankau—*Century.* A wealthy young widower with a gift of versifying roams over half the world dreaming of a woman he could love. He meets her at last and—but read the story for yourself.

*FAINT PERFUME—Zona Gale—*Appleton.* Expert character drawing with a tale of ideal love that is more beautiful than expert.

THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD—Philip Gibbs—*Doran.* Souls and nations in the absorbing afterwar process of reconstruction.

MY FRIEND FROM LIMOUSIN—Jean Giraudoux—*Harper.* This book, winner of the 1922 Balzac Prize, contains much beauty, deeply hidden as the pearl within the oyster. No hasty glance will perceive it.

WANDERER OF THE WASTELAND—Zane Grey—*Harper.* The soul which so often escapes the he-man is here found among desert vistas.

UNFINISHED TALES FROM A RUSSIAN PRISON—Marguerite E. Harrison—*Doran.* Insets of lives, from confidences imparted in the women's prison at Moscow, effectively told and with the dramatic appeal of good fiction.

THE MISSING MAN—Mary R. P. Hatch—*Four Seas.* The bad twin tries to take advantage of the virtuous twin's amnesia but he cannot deceive the wife. (Reprinted from 1892.)

TOMORROW ABOUT THIS TIME—Grace Livingston Hill—*Lippincott.* For a wild, irresponsible little hoyden like Athalie permanently to reform right on the last page, seems to us impossible. As for Alice, she is just too unselfish and good for a wicked, wicked world.

AFTER ALL—George F. Hummel—*Boni, Liveright.* Wherein a conceited cad sexo-analyzes himself.

SIMON CALLED PETER—Robert Keable—*Putnam.* A young minister discovers sex during the war—and is much upset thereby.

WHITE LIGHTNING—Edwin Herbert Lewis—*Covici-McGee.* It is possible to take chemistry for a base, stir in a bit of war, a dash of authentic Indian lore, add Henry Ford's personality, then spice and have a romance in ten thousand? Yes, this book proves the fact.

*BABBITT—Sinclair Lewis—*Harcourt, Brace.* American business has not improved in spite of Mr. Lewis's quarrel with it.

UNDER A THOUSAND EYES—Florence Bingham Livingston—*Cosmopolitan.* The story of a girl who loved the small town and why she loved it.

FIFTY-FIFTY—A. Neil Lyons—*Dodd, Mead.* Forty-eight brief stories sparkling with wit, glowing with humor, saturated with irony, and permeated with quiet philosophy.

ACCORDING TO GIBSON—Denis Mackail—*Houghton Mifflin.* Ten fantastic adventures of a man who is a combination of Münchhausen and the Ancient Mariner.

WITHOUT CONDITIONS—Agnes Mure Mackenzie—*Doubleday, Page.* A slender whimsical love story cast in a Victorian setting. Yet when roses bloom the wraiths of all the brides of yesteryear must smile and dream of rosemary—that's for remembrance.

THE DEBUTANTE—Edna Walker Malcoskey—*Dutton.* A flapper meditates profoundly on the postwar world problems in the pauses of her violent love episodes.

WALTER OF TIVERTON—Bernard Marshall—*Appleton.* Richard Cœur de Lion returned to his throne just in time to save the hero.

THE DAY'S JOURNEY—W. B. Maxwell—*Doubleday, Page.* The story of a friendship—two men see life together.

MR. AND MRS. SEN—Louise Jordan Miln—*Stokes.* A marriage between yellow and white with its problems and tragedies.

*WHERE THE BLUE BEGINS—Christopher Morley—*Doubleday, Page.* Fantasy and satire skilfully mingled—the hero is a dog with human attributes.

TRODDEN GOLD—Howard Vincent O'Brien—*Little, Brown.* Does money make a happy marriage? Here is part of an answer.

WET CLAY—Seumas O'Kelly—*Stokes.* A tragic drama of love and jealousy on an Irish farm of today when an Irish-American tries to return to his kin.

THE MYSTERY ROAD—E. Phillips Oppenheim—*Little, Brown.* A modern Galahad wins his dangerous way into and out of Soviet Russia in the service of his beloved.

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THE MANUSCRIPT OF YOUTH—Diana Patrick—*Dutton.* A charming love story born out of the storm and stress period of some engaging youngsters.

THE VISION OF DESIRE—Margaret Pedler—*Doran.* A woman hater lured from his hatred by a process of unflaggingly sentimental incidents.

THE SINGING WELLS—Roland Pertwee—*Knopf.* A terrific automobile chase through the Algerian deserts is the breathless climax of a rapidfire tale of British versus Arab love.

STELLA DALLAS—Olive Higgins Prouty—*Houghton Mifflin.* A study in classes—what happens to the child of a mixed marriage.

THE CITY OF LILIES—Anthony Pryde and R. K. Weekes—*McBride.* "Off with his head" is the chronic amusement of a Balkan prince; his overthrow makes a mediæval drama in a very modern setting.

THE RETURN OF FRANK CLAMART—Henry C. Rowland—*Harper.* The reformed chief of the Apaches risks his life to destroy a venomous drug ring.

THE SEA-HAWK—Rafael Sabatini—*Houghton Mifflin.* Sir Oliver Tressilian among the Barbary Corsairs—Sabatini again spins his yarn of fights and furor in another setting.

MISS MINERVA ON THE OLD PLANTATION—Emma Speed Sampson—*Reilly, Lee.* Fun, fast and furious, told with real zest, is the lot of these children, white and black, all old friends of the reading public.

SINBAD—C. Kay Scott—*Seltzer.* An uncouth extravaganza of free love attributed to Greenwich Village.

CORDELIA THE MAGNIFICENT—Leroy Scott—*Holt.* The society lady again sees the falsity of her little world's ways—and profits by the discovery.

PONJOLA—Cynthia Stockley—*Putnam.* South Africa and its drink give a beautiful heroine a chance to pose becomingly in trousers.

*THE FASCINATING STRANGER—Booth Tarkington—*Doubleday, Page.* Tarkington in his most comic mood—delightful, if not profound.

HIS CHILDREN'S CHILDREN—Arthur Train—*Scribner.* The author of this picture of several generations of a New York City family is undeniably shocked at the way his characters behave.

BAROQUE—Louis Joseph Vance—*Dutton.* A New York girl braves the terrors of the Camorra by impersonating her twin brother in a tale full of thrills.

*THE CATHEDRAL—Hugh Walpole—*Doran.* The dragging down of a great man by his own pride and his complete lack of humor.

THE DESERT HORIZON—E. L. Grant Watson—*Knopf.* Beautiful and strong is this tale of the seductive power of the Australian bush and its youthful victim.

THE AFFAIR AT FLOWER ACRES—Carolyn Wells—*Doran.* Another murder mystery with a new twist that complicates the unraveling.

MEN LIKE GODS—H. G. Wells—*Macmillan.* Two earthlings stray into Utopia in the far distant future.

A GENTLEMAN OF SORTS—Everett Young—*Holt.* An excellent story of Parisian society in which an American and his wife, both of French descent, are made welcome.

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THE BOOK OF THE MONTH

"CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PLAYS"

By Walter Prichard Eaton

Mr. Eaton's review is the eighth of a series of longer book reviews to be published each month in THE BOOKMAN. *The books discussed will not necessarily be new nor will they be books which have never before been reviewed in the magazine. The aim of the editors is to present, in the selection of volumes and reviewers, articles which shall constitute solid pieces of criticism.*

PROFESSOR QUINN is as sure that we have an American drama as the Theatre Guild is sure that we haven't. He is even as sure that we have as the Equity Players were before they started to produce it. It all depends, of course, on what you mean by American drama. If you mean stage plays written by Americans, our managers produce nearly a hundred every season now, and reject at least ten thousand which the authors are sure are masterpieces. (Did anybody ever write a play which he didn't think was good?) So far as we can gather from Professor Quinn's rather uncritical introduction to this selection of native texts, that is about what he does mean. But in that sense the Ford car represents the art of carriage designing. It will hardly do as a definition. Other than the fact that they were written by Americans, chiefly about American life, what is there to distinguish these plays from the plays of other nations? What is there in any or all of them which constitutes a contribution to the art of the drama? Are all or any of them more distinctively American in this sense than were our plays of a generation ago? In what direction is the real native impulse in our drama developing? These are questions I should like to see Professor Quinn answer. His introduction disappoints me.

The first of the five plays he includes, for instance, is Jesse Lynch Williams's brilliant intellectual comedy, "Why Marry?", produced in 1917. Nobody questions the wit and not many people, probably, the wisdom, of this highly polished, artificial, sophisticated work. But is there anything actually American about it? Mr. Williams was born, I believe, in Missouri, but his dramatic ancestors were Irish. Their names were Sheridan, Wilde, and Shaw. The play has the derivative quality which belongs to all our aristocratic literature of the past.

The next play in the book is Eugene O'Neill's "The Emperor Jones". Here, surely, is a drama of authentic originality. It would be an original contribution to the stage of any country. It is part, to be sure, of the world movement toward a release of the human imagination from the fetters of realism, but O'Neill is not a slave to that movement. Indeed, he is rather a leader of it, and from the very start of his career his plays showed the oppressive head of steam his imagination carried. In form, too, "The Emperor Jones" follows no

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model. It breaks new tracks. Here indeed is American drama.

Third comes "Nice People", by Rachel Crothers. A great many years ago the realistic "problem play" got itself combined in America with the sentimental story dear to our hearts (and the hearts of all Saxons), and resulted in a form of hybrid exemplified by "The Lion and the Mouse" and a long line of dramas, of which "Nice People" is merely one more example. In literature, Scott Fitzgerald got something of an original and authentic point of view toward the modern flapper. But this play is merely journalism. It is one of our dramas which explain the attitude of the Theatre Guild. It is a distinct falling off, too, from Miss Crothers's own past standard.

"The Hero", by Gilbert Emery, on the other hand, is honest realism, American not in form — which is the standardized product of late nineteenth century development — but in unflinching treatment of a native theme. And this play failed in our theatre. Why should Professor Quinn say it "succumbed to unfavorable theatrical conditions"? The whole point is that the public would have none of it. The play refused to temporize or sentimentalize. It said a war hero was, and remained, a moral coward; that physical bravery is possible in a cheap skate, and that the world's applause often goes in our land where it isn't deserved. It was the truth without a sugar coat. And, as usual, the American public rejected it. So far as realism goes, time and time again we have seen it rejected in our theatre, when applied to our own life by an honest playwright. It appears still to be rejected. Why doesn't Professor Quinn discourse on this? "The Hero", in a true sense, is American drama. But what avails it when the public turns away?

The last play in the collection is the Kaufman-Connelly comedy, "To the Ladies!" The work of these two men has been hailed in many quarters as marking the birth of American satire in the theatre. Stuff and nonsense! Their satire is the superficial grin at our national foibles, or the good natured, keen eyed laughter at our more obvious absurdities, which newspaper humorists have indulged in for years, and which, as a matter of fact, was to be found in our theatre, in embryo, as early as the 1830's. "To the Ladies!" is American drama, in the sense that it pokes fun at the surface pageant of our life, as Ade did in "The College Widow", for instance, and in the sense that it combines this satirical but good natured laughter with a rather feeble and insignificant dramatic fable. In any high sense, of satire there is none. Compare "To the Ladies!" with "Androcles and the Lion", for example. The very fact that the satire here is so superficial, the dramatic fable such a trivial, mean thing, almost silly, makes the play, alas, but the more characteristically American. We have had satirists. Mark Twain was one. "The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg" is satire. It would make a superb play. I know a manager who considered it for a year, as a play. He rejected the idea finally because he said it was "too grim" for the public. What he meant was, it cut too deep. There was a chance for satire in "To the Ladies!", of this deep cutting sort. But either the authors lacked the ability or the courage to apply the subsoil plow. They cultivated their field with a short toothed harrow. And they made what is, after all, good,

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traditional American stage entertainment. But they didn't make the kind of adult drama the Theatre Guild is after.

We heartily sympathize with Professor Quinn's ardent desire to turn America's attention to its own dramatic fare. But in the long run nothing will be gained by being so uncritical about it.

Contemporary American Plays. Edited with an introduction on recent American drama by Arthur Hobson Quinn. Charles Scribner's Sons.

A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

THREE STATESMEN ON THE WAR

By Charles Seymour

WITH few exceptions, prominent statesmen on the Allied side have thus far refrained from writing war books. Now we have three who not merely played an important rôle in the war, but who are also very distinguished authors. Viviani is a former prime minister of France and one of the chiefs of the war mission of 1917; what is of greater importance in the present connection, perhaps, he is a historian of some repute. Nitti is a former premier of Italy, and also a first rate economist. Everyone knows the scintillations of Winston Churchill's political career, although some may not remember that he is the author of a really admirable political biography as well as of notable if rather journalistic historical studies of the Boer War. The three books under consideration all deal with the world war, although they emphasize different aspects. Viviani treats of German responsibility and chiefly of the crisis of 1914. Nitti is concerned with the peace and especially with what he regards as French responsibility for existing European chaos. Churchill devotes a third of his book to political and naval problems of Great Britain before the war, two chapters to the crisis of 1914, and the remainder to the conduct of the navy through the spring of 1915.

Both Viviani and Nitti have plenty of critical sense when they care to exercise it, but their attitude in these books is so far from the judicial that it is fair to call the volumes political pamphlets. Nitti is so thoroughly convinced of the stupidity and cruelty of the Versailles Treaty and of the imperialistic designs of contemporary France, that he marshals facts and arguments merely to win his readers to this point of view. His analysis of the Treaty, covering 150 pages, interprets the settlement as a colossal example of faithlessness and cynicism on the part of the Allies. "The victors have kept none of the promises which they made in the hour of danger, but have, on the other hand, belied the principles of freedom, democracy, and self-determination of peoples which they pretend to hold." To this alleged faithlessness the author attributes the economic and political chaos which he describes in the following hundred pages. He concludes with a demand for a complete reconstruction, which in his opinion can be accomplished

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only through the economic and moral pressure of America. It is unfortunate that the solid economic sense of Signor Nitti should be blurred by the inaccuracy of such political generalizations as that quoted, and frequently should disappear completely in the flood of invective which he directs against France. A surprising disregard for the sentimental factor in politics, combined with not infrequent errors of fact, robs many of his most effective arguments of any conclusiveness.

M. Viviani plans to show, by the recently published Austrian and German documents, the extent of German responsibility for the war. Much of his book is a rehash. The chapters in which he describes his experiences and impressions during July and August, 1914, have the value that belongs to the autobiography of an important participant in great events. But his analysis of the Kautsky documents and the Austrian Red Book betrays the qualities of a partizan. Emotion is frequently substituted for scientific criticism, and inevitably confuses the vital issues. By refusing to admit the anxiety of many German officials to preserve the peace, and by attempting to convict the Kaiser and Bethmann of something more than stupidity and weakness (are not these the unforgivable sins in executives?), he lifts some of the responsibility from the shoulders of those who may fairly be regarded as the real criminals — the military and naval leaders in Austria and Germany. As in Nitti's book, the eye and the brain of the reader are distracted by misprints in proper names and dates.

Not merely in interest but in historical value Churchill's book is by far the most important of the three. It is largely autobiographical, and, as we might imagine, the dramatic quality of the events in which the author was concerned loses nothing in his exposition. He is able to impart a touch of romance to the technical details of naval design, and when he comes to the chase of the "Goeben" and "Breslau", the battle off the Falklands, the attempt to intercept the German cruisers on their return from the bombardment of Hartlepool and Scarborough, the reader's thrills are genuine. His book has naturally the qualities of special pleading for the preparations of the Admiralty and the accomplishments of the navy during the first ten months of fighting. But there is ample evidence of studied fairness in the treatment of controversial issues. Not merely is much new material presented, but where Mr. Churchill covers the same tracks previously traversed by the "Official History" he has done much to clarify and popularize the technicalities of Sir Julian Corbett. A following volume is promised.

As We See It. By Rene Viviani, translated by Thomas R. Ybarra. Harper and Bros.

The Decadence of Europe, The Paths of Reconstruction. By Francesco Nitti, translated by F. Brittain. Henry Holt and Co.

The World Crisis. By the Rt. Hon. Winston S. Churchill. Charles Scribner's Sons.

SPORTS AND SUCH

By T. R. Coward

THE great Australian tennis player Anthony Wilding, killed in action in the late war to the infinite regret of all true sportsmen, once wrote a book on tennis entitled "On the Court and Off". Comparisons are commonly reputed odious, but we could not help

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thinking of that book while reading "Singles and Doubles" by W. T. Tilden, 2d. Where Mr. Wilding was entertaining Mr. Tilden is chatty, where Mr. Wilding was pleasantly casual Mr. Tilden is chaotic, where Mr. Wilding was concisely specific Mr. Tilden is verbose. And there are errors of taste such as the excessive and rather high schoolish use of nicknames which it seems to us might better have been avoided. Mr. Tilden is unquestionably one of the greatest singles players in the history of lawn tennis — perhaps Norman Brookes to whom he pays high tribute is his only rival — and therefore what he has to say about the game should be of interest to its thousands of followers. But there is far too much irrelevant material, and far too little discussion of actual tennis, its tactics, playing theories, strokes, training hints, etc. What we want primarily from the premier tennis player of the world is advice on tennis and not his opinion of the relative merits of Charlie Chaplin and Mary Pickford. Such stuff is all very well as press agent business for prima donnas and second rate authors, but it is totally out of place in dealing with a complex and highly competitive sport. There is no ideal book on tennis, but the nearest to it is either one which confines itself to the technique of the game, a side which various English critics handle admirably, or one concerned with a general discussion of the game, its personalities and famous matches. To combine the two is a very difficult feat. Wilding managed it, but he had a style as terse and workmanlike as his tennis, and his taste was impeccable. We should welcome a book from Mr. Tilden which treated entirely of strokes and court tactics, and hope he will give it to us. In the meantime the only value we can see in "Singles and Doubles" is the chapter on the development of the younger players. The author has been extraordinarily generous with his time and ability in aiding the younger generation, and what he has to say is very much to the point.

If you are tired of the front porch and want to camp, while your wife prefers motoring, you can combine both pleasures and go "autocamping". F. E. Brimmer in "Motor Campcraft" and in "Autocamping" tells you how to do it with the minimum of expense and the maximum of enjoyment. All the practical details of tent, kit, and food are exhaustively treated, and you have every reason to look forward to a highway vacation if you follow his advice. But if you like stiffer work and yearn for mountains you may find some good pointers in "Vacation on the Trail" by Eugene Davenport, while a reading of Elon Jessup's "Roughing It Smoothly" will probably make it easier for you if you get lost in the woods, have to rescue a drowning man, build a fire, or in fact handle almost any "outing" emergency. "The Outdoorsman's Handbook", revised by Hy. S. Watson and Captain Paul A. Curtis, Jr. is a mine of information and advice. It tells you how to train dogs, judge a horse, choose a gun, and a hundred other

Singles and Doubles. By W. T. Tilden, 2d. George H. Doran Company.
Motor Campcraft. By F. E. Brimmer. The Macmillan Co.
Autocamping. By F. E. Brimmer. Stewart Kidd Co.
Vacation on the Trail. By Eugene Davenport. The Macmillan Co.
Roughing It Smoothly, How to Avoid Vacation Pitfalls. By Elon Jessup. G. P. Putnam's Sons.
The Outdoorsman's Handbook. Revised by Hy. S. Watson and Capt. Paul A. Curtis, Jr. Stewart Kidd Co.
So This Is Golf! By Harry Leon Wilson. Cosmopolitan Book Corp.

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things. A book that might be pat at any time.

Golf, like the Ford, has to answer for a great deal of bad humor. Harry Leon Wilson's "So This is Golf!" is a pot boiler, and only occasionally funny. A goodly portion of these United States knows that Mr. Wilson can be wonderfully amusing, but here he evidently gritted his teeth and went to work. The result is sad; the illustrations are worse than the text.

VICTORIAN MEMORIES

By Maurice Francis Egan

"DE SENECTUTE", which opens this book, is a dialogue in a college garden. It is the atmosphere of those conversations which have become so fashionable of late between a very old man and men who are much younger. What is called the Victorian time has been mellowed; it begins to have the glow of an old painting; we are just far enough from it to find it interesting or to misunderstand it. Frederic Harrison, who died on the thirteenth of January, at the age of ninety-two, had memories even of the pre-Victorian era of King William, which was really a survival of the manners and habits of George IV. In "De Senectute", he shows us that old age — very old age — has its consolations and enjoyments; and he simply emphasizes the truth known to every old man who has not wasted the whole of his life in merely making money, who has accumulated interests of the head and the heart, that old age is precious in its leisure. This it was hardly necessary for him to say; but nevertheless he said it with a new charm.

It will perhaps occur to the reader that none of the old men who celebrate the contentment of their time of life take into consideration the wretchedness of that old man who has not accumulated a competence. To climb another's stair, no matter how beloved the owner of the stair may be, is, as Dante puts it, sometimes full of bitterness. In the monastic days, the poor gentleman had his place, his garden, perhaps his cell, and the privilege of going into the world when he wanted to. There were burses for the old. Yet in our civilization there is no provision for the old who have been too altruistic, too devoted to their families or prevented by temperament or circumstances from providing for their own future. Who provides for Père Goriot? Mr. Harrison, belonging to a special class, was not the man to show how old age united to poverty endures life; and one who cannot do this adds very little to what Cicero has already said.

Those of us who have acquired a taste for Frederic Harrison — who was one of the most tolerant of free thinkers, who longed to construct rather than analyze or destroy — will find him at his best in "My Victorian Memoirs", and probably at his most irritating in "Greek and Elizabethan Tragedy". He gives his vote for the purity and proportion of the Greek tragedies, and he is one of the few Englishmen who take the view of Voltaire as to Shakespeare's mixture of the tragic and the comic. This essay is sure to strike sparks from the mind of the thoughtful reader. It calls attention to a fact now almost forgotten by the readers of English history, that the influence of Prince Albert — thoroughly German and autocratic in mental formation and entirely dominant with Queen Victoria

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— might have produced a new revolution in England, if he had lived. But, after all, there were too many sturdy Englishmen like the Duke of Wellington, who publicly reminded this Teutonic Prince that he had been imported in order to perpetuate the dynasty and not to talk on English affairs!

Mr. Harrison pays a deserved compliment to Dr. Wilbur L. Cross's "History of Henry Fielding", which is a masterpiece of careful biography. Mr. Harrison admires "Tom Jones" greatly. He regrets that Fielding lived so much with libertines, although he was anything but a libertine himself. Fielding was affected in his point of view by the vicious tone of English society which existed until Queen Victoria — denounced as a prude by the remnant of the Prince Regent's set — gave society at least the air of being decent. The pre-Victorian tone, Mr. Harrison says, excludes Fielding's books from the young and innocent.

> But, as Coleridge pointed out, the breezy coarseness of Fielding is less mischievous than the close sentimentalism of Richardson. Still there are things in Fielding which for my part I condemn on grounds of art quite as much as of morality. "The Modern Husband" is simply disgusting. So is Lady Bellaston. It is no use for Fielding and his defenders to say that such things existed in the smart world and were *even tolerated in it*. In the first place, they were not tolerated on the stage and in novels, even in that age and in that world. "The Modern Husband" play was denounced again and again; Lady Mary Montagu, Fielding's cousin, said he had made Tom Jones a "scoundrel". In the next place, there are things in fact which are so disgusting that they cannot be the subject of Art. Moralists, preachers and confessors must tackle them, but they are unfit for comedy and romance — the business of which is to charm, and not to disgust.

Mr. Harrison declares that "we ancients who seem so useless and so incapable of happiness really live with the mighty ones of old". He says that he is spared the trouble of even casting his eye over "the new stuff", above all over the new novels. Even the laudation of the publisher of each epoch making romance, each novel of the age, leaves him cold; he would as soon listen to the chatter in a crowded tram car or the smoking room of a country club as read the modern up to date novel of what "they" call "life". He rather thinks that not even Thackeray was quite true in his pictures of the upper classes in England. Dickens and Thackeray really knew very little about them, except from caricatures. As to Thackeray, this comes to us as a blow but it has been said before, and there is something to it. The voices of the old masters ring in Harrison's ears. Of Dante, for instance: "Onorate l'atissimo poeta."

When one knows how seriously the English regard precedence at dinner parties, one can understand the admiration of Mr. Harrison for the hostess who, passing by the guest of honor, a distinguished privy councilor, took the arm of Robert Browning, saying, "Onorate l'atissimo poeta."

The last essay in the book is an attempt on the part of Mr. Harrison to make a philosophic synthesis. As an Englishman has never been capable of making such a synthesis, one cannot be surprised at Mr. Harrison's failure, although he gets nearer to it than Bacon or Locke or Spencer. He calls Spencer's "Synthetic Philosopher" a vast *"mare ignotum"*. He frankly admits that no great writer, except St. Thomas Aquinas, the disciple of Aristotle, has as yet succeeded in making a satisfactory *summa* of philosophy.

We all admit, with Mr. Harrison, that a *summa* "down to date" — to use a modern phrase — is badly needed.

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There was no mind of the eighteenth or nineteenth century comprehensive or scientific enough to produce it; and so far the twentieth century has shown a deterioration in the process necessary for a great synthesis. Mr. Harrison has added very little to the methods of Comte. He repeats and rerepeats a truth too often forgotten — that philosophy itself cannot be separated from actual life or morality or religion. When it became a metaphysical toy with the later schoolmen, it perished.

To the reader who desires mental stimulus, who thrives on mental irritation, the charm of style and the originality of thought of this book will give continuous pleasure. It is a volume which lends itself to annotations, and the margins are sufficiently wide.

De Senectute: More Last Words. By Frederic Harrison. D. Appleton and Co.

INDIAN RHYTHMS

By Llewellyn Jones

MRS. AUSTIN'S book has a threefold interest. Her Indian — rather she prefers, against the protest of Alice Corbin Henderson and others, to say Amerindian — poems are well worth reading for their own sake, as are her own poems included in the book. The Indian poems are, apart from their beauty, a needed document to show us that the Indians whom we have mistreated so shamefully have more to give us than we have allowed ourselves to see. And, lastly, the book will interest the ethnologist and the investigator of the question of rhythm.

As Mrs. Austin puts her very controversial article on Indian rhythms first, we may begin by dealing with it — merely remarking to the reader that it ought not to be read first. The poems are the thing. For the introduction is not only highly technical but rather dubious in its theories. Briefly, Mrs. Austin holds, if compression into a sentence does not mutilate her idea too much, that poetic rhythm is a function — in the mathematical sense — of the landscape. And that our white American bards will find their rhythms subdued to the landscape and removed further and further from their English prototypes. But what does she mean by rhythm? Really she means cadence — and landscape and the conditions of living which any land imposes might well affect cadence. But in criticizing the English rhythm she changes her point of view and regards it as a rhythm dominated by its Greek originals, and speaks of iambic as the "rhythm of privilege". But iambic is not a rhythm at all in her original sense. It is merely a metric scheme to which quite English cadence was adapted.

This and similar confusions seem to vitiate Mrs. Austin's arguments throughout. In one place, for instance, she says:

> The extraordinary, unpremeditated likeness between the works of such writers as Amy Lowell, Carl Sandburg, Vachel Lindsay, and Edgar Lee Masters exhibiting a disposition to derive their impulses from the gestures and experiences enforced by the American environment, to our own aboriginals, points away from any such usurpation by the Greek and Hebrew aboriginals. . . .

To which the reply is that these people are totally unlike one another. Lindsay's rhythms are really based on the old English accentual measures, Sandburg has a sense of quantity — a

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slow spondaic movement at times — that Lindsay totally lacks, and Masters for the most part writes in blank verse. As for Sherwood Anderson, a few of his poems may suggest the rhythm of Indian corn dances but it is surprising how many of them run in Swinburnian anapæsts quite audible under their slight disguise of printing in prose form.

But questions like these cannot be settled in short essays and shorter reviews. That Mrs. Austin is doing something for which we cannot be sufficiently grateful is quite evident from even a single sample of her work. Here is a song from the Paiute:

SONG FOR THE PASSING OF A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN

Strong sun across the sod can make
Such quickening as your countenance!

I am more worth for what your passing wakes,
Great races in my loins, to you that cry.
My blood is redder for your loveliness.

Mrs. Austin has not given us very many poems; other poets, however, have found the same treasure trove, and we may expect, if the work of reinterpretation is well done, the salvaging of a most beautiful and significant body of pure poetry.

The American Rhythm. By Mary Austin. Harcourt, Brace and Co.

FROM THE PARTHENON I LEARN . . .

By Willard Wattles

FROM the Parthenon I learn
Whatever in our souls shall burn
Like the white flame of Phidias,
It shall not change, it shall not pass.

From the pyramids I know
How the stately soul may grow,
Wind and sand its enemies,
Through the embarrassed centuries.

From the Taj Mahal I see
Grief hath its own majesty;
And the Alhambra's shattered towers
Mind me of immortal hours.

That pale mountain of Milan
Flushing like a rose with dawn,
Tells how death can only be
A lovely thing we do not see.

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RECENT BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

TO improvise successfully a long series of Johnsonian animadversions upon a Johnsonian plurality of topics requires a skilful parodist well versed in the idiom of Boswell, and a public with an indefatigable mind for satire. Both are present in the publication of "The New Boswell" by R. M. Freeman (Stokes). Mr. Freeman knows his Johnson well enough to hit off topical subjects with sufficient fidelity to be amusing. The conversations purport to have been communicated from Elysium, and touch upon the Irish question, golf, auction bridge, daily journalism, infant welfare, Bolshevism, the Elysian telephone service, America, Coué, and prize fighting.

This would probably be a strange world if everyone in it gave way to his inclination toward vagabondage. The road opens wide and only the obligations — real or imagined — of modern society hold most people at home. There are many who would love to wander aimlessly. There are plenty who would emulate Vachel Lindsay and even some who would follow Harry Kemp. The wanderlust is not confined to those who listen to the voice that gave to the world the priceless rambling essays of Robert Louis Stevenson. However, every wanderer is not a poet and there is an immense gap between R. L. S. and the tramp. Nels Anderson has shown this in "The Hobo" (University of Chicago). He has made an investigation of the hobo not only in his Chicago haunts but on the road. This sociological study is the result. Contact with the tramp has taken away any false sentimentality from the student, while a study of his problems, their causes and their results, has killed any latent antipathy toward the hobo on the grounds that he is an I. W. W. The book is the product of a well balanced observation — a splendid sequel to the work started by Carleton Parker. The migratory worker is probably a long way from serious consideration by the country's legislators, except in their tendency to pass laws against him, but books of this kind help educate the unthinking critics.

Poetry that is full, round, minted from the rich veins of plain homely life, crisp with the green watercress quality of English countryside, unforced as a full voiced brook — such a miraculous combination does indeed appear in the new volume of "Georgian Poetry" 1920-22 (Putnam). Well known Georgians such as Walter de la Mare, Drinkwater, Gibson, Graves, are herein joined by seven younger English poets wearing the same instinctive badge of loyalty to the sound and the felicitous in English life. How these young poets have been able to keep so close to the simple and the heart stabbing elements of poetry while our own youngsters are still wallowing in the nets of the superficial, is certainly puzzling. A cool and artless aroma of field and wood exudes from the volume, together with the tang and doughtiness of English character, telling of poetic roots set deep in a rich productive soil.

Once upon a time a certain English gentleman came to America, spent a

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few weeks in lecturing and observation, went home and wrote a book. But wait! — this book did *not* tell Americans what is wrong with their government, or how to reduce the H. C. of L., or how to improve transit facilities; it even forebore a comparison between Oxford and American universities. Of course, this is passing strange, and you will want to know the name of this man. He is none other than Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. And what did Sir Arthur write about? Well, he ran amuck of daylight saving; remarked, after viewing the Washington monument, that "Americans know how to honour their dead leaders, even if they do occasionally place them in rather difficult positions when they are alive"; visited Macy's department store, saw Houdini's famous trunk trick, took in the Bronx Park zoo on a hot day, lectured a few times on spiritualism, and apparently enjoyed his visit from first to last. Whether you believe in or discountenance spiritualism, "Our American Adventure" (Doran) is absorbing reading, for Sir Arthur has not forgotten how to interest a reader, even if he no longer has the assistance of the late lamented Mr. Holmes.

Theodore Roosevelt's idealism, particularly his religious idealism, furnishes the scheme on which Reverend E. H. Cotton has built his new Roosevelt biography, "The Ideals of Theodore Roosevelt" (Appleton). Roosevelt's career is traced in smooth running narrative, with frequent anecdotal excursions such as are requisite to popular life stories of great Americans. Mr. Cotton makes a neat synthesis of the more accessible Roosevelt material, emphasizing strenuously those facts and incidents which best suit his own purpose. This volume, like most thesis biographies, presents a partial and highly eulogistic view of the subject and must suffer, in consequence, a certain loss of esteem among those readers who are not quite ready to grant all of Mr. Cotton's assumptions. Corinne Roosevelt Robinson contributes a foreword.

So much enthusiasm has been expended in the admiration of the wit and picturesqueness of Lytton Strachey's brilliant dissection of Victoria and other nineteenth century luminaries, that it is high time for Mr. Strachey to be considered more soberly, and with a more detailed reference to his solidity and his scholarly pretensions. The reissue of "Landmarks in French Literature" (Holt) furnishes the occasion. Mr. Strachey's peaks and promontories are the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the age of transition between Montaigne and Louis XIV, the age of the great Louis himself, the eighteenth century, the romantic movement, and the nineteenth century — preeminently "the age of Criticism". Take up "Landmarks" yourself; notice with what meticulous care Mr. Strachey has immersed himself in French literature; what account he takes of the "fourth dimension" in criticism; how precisely he measures his statement; with what psychological insight he interrogates the classics in order to align his signposts. Indeed, in its erudition, in its delicate intellectual conscience, this volume of "Landmarks" demonstrates impressively what sound foundations go to support distinguished satire.

"Joys of the Road" (Atlantic) is a little anthology "in praise of walking" edited by Waldo R. Browne for those who have a genius for sauntering, for those who understand "the art of

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Walking". Bliss Carman, C. Fox-Smith, Thoreau, Arthur Symons, John Burroughs, and William Morris contribute verses and essays, and of course "On Going a Journey" and "Walking Tours" by those inveterate walkers and talkers, William Hazlitt and Robert Louis Stevenson, are included.

Amelia Leavitt Hill in "Redeeming Old Homes" (Holt) handles ably a subject all too attractive to those with only the dangerous amount of knowledge. She lapses into neither a cheap and pretentious æstheticism nor the literary method of "The American Boys' Handibook", although her subject matter is minutely detailed and essentially practical. The text is more convincing than the before-and-after illustrations, some of which make one tremble for their effect upon a public enthusiastic over almost any *old* thing! But her advice is both sound and sensible, and will be of value to those capable of applying it.

The Irish question ran its course in the newspapers of a year ago, and then ceased to hold the public's interest, partly because there seemed to be so many sides to the fight that it was difficult to follow. Now the conflict has taken on book form, and some of the issues are made clear. In "The Drama of Sinn Fein" (Scribner), Shaw Desmond, Irish and a believer in the cause of the Irish republic, sets forth rather sketchily, and in the present tense, the externals of the fight from 1916 to 1923. He explains that Sinn Fein itself is both an idea and a society which, under the leadership of Arthur Griffith, tried to occupy a middle ground, asking from England a metaphysical freedom which did not necessarily imply separation from England. Later, its policy of passive resistance went to pieces because the nature of the Irish was against it. De Valera, we learn, is the son of a Spanish artist and a New York Irish mother. We are given the details of the negotiations with Germany by Roger Casement, and of the conflict between Irish forces and the Black and Tans. The book closes with a discussion of the treaty which founded the Irish Free State and with the author's passionately reiterated belief that Ireland must separate from England, that only then can the two countries know and be of real service to one another.

Primarily "The Burgess Flower Book for Children" by Thornton W. Burgess (Little, Brown) is for the younger ones, although the technical names of flowers are also given, and an appendix is inserted at the end of the book for older boys and girls. Peter Rabbit, famed for his curiosity, adventures among the wild flowers, and the descriptions he gives of the many flowers he sees are such that they can easily be recognized — an advantage which both children and "lay" lovers of flowers will appreciate. The illustrations are excellent.

"Egypt — Old and New" by Percy F. Martin (Doran) is a sumptuously bound and illustrated book. The pictures thoroughly make up for the fact that the informative narrative concerning the country of Tut-Ankh-Amen is somewhat arid.

Why should we read? What should we read? How should we read? These neither superfluous nor idle questions Georg Brandes raises and answers in his charming essay, "On Reading", reissued by Duffield and Company. Mr.

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Brandes damns the newspapers, bans what he denominates the dangerous and wearisome books, and commends the classics with a temperate sanity, insisting only that they be read when they convey the verisimilitude of life — when they increase our knowledge, dissolve our prejudices, and crystallize our personalities.

Genuine, individual, and very lovely are these poems of Hazel Hall's entitled "Walkers" (Dodd, Mead). The same viewpoint is maintained in them all; a watcher from the window sets down her impressions of passers by. Some of the people go over the same route every day, and the interpretation of these frequently seen walkers is more detailed, and intimate. Some few pass only once, and these are caught in vivid, swift touches that bring out a salient point of character. The imagery of the poems is especially fine, the philosophy of them seems most poignantly revealed in the poem called "Protection":

> I have envied, I have pitied,
> Wrapped their sorrows over me
> Like a shawl, to keep from knowing
> Cold that is colder than the sea.

All ye lovers of melodrama, rally round and hark the lugubrious wail of Clare Sheridan's literary saxophone as she jazzes the Irish Rebellion, skips in erratic arpeggios over Paris, sobs over the fate of Greece, and assails the ear with a dolorous smear, symbolizing the woeful conditions obtaining in Smyrna, Turkey, Russia, etc. The sob sister art is brought to perfection in "West and East" (Boni, Liveright). The Irish Rebellion lends itself admirably to the lacrimatory fireworks of a saxophone, but there is something decidedly inapropos about the instrument when used to interpret the horrors of the Near East. If we are to take Mrs. Sheridan's word for it, circumstances in the Near East are incredible in their misery and endless hopelessness. Wherefore we decry the typical commencing-in-next-Monday's issue sort of newspaper sensationalism that fairly oozes out of the bindings of Mrs. Sheridan's book. If the "World" correspondent had done what her editor told her to do, we could write "stet!" on the flyleaf. She was bidden "to write about women and children, nationalism and the evolution of the new generation; prices of clothes, food, street cars, theatres, books and papers". For a time she sticks to orders, and then human nature gets the best of her, and she attempts political philosophizing, with a most inharmonious result. We confess a predilection for good sob stuff, wherefore much of the book appeals; but for mere twaddle of a third rate sort we have no stomach, and much of the book falls under that head.

"The Evolution and Progress of Mankind" (Stokes) by the distinguished scholar, the late Hermann Klaatsch, discusses many problems of importance, but the most interesting to him and to us is that of the racial origin and development of man. The heart of the problem is the relation of man to the anthropoid or manlike apes. The mingling of human and animal features in these apes, he says, caused them to be regarded as ancestors of man, but the facts point instead to a common ancestor from whom both man and the manlike ape of today diverged. In fact the larger amount of modification of this original type is on the side of the ape, whose ancestors were much more like man, possessing for example canine teeth no larger than man's and a thumb which has since atro-

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phied. More important still, Professor Klaatsch presents evidence for more than one ancestral type. Not only were there an African gorilloid from which diverged the gorilla and the Neanderthal man, and an Asiatic orangoid from which diverged the orang and the Aurignac man, but there is evidence in the Heidelberg jaw of a gibbonoid and in the Weimar jaw of a chimpanzoid. Professor Klaatsch concedes that these had a common origin, but considers it extremely remote.

A "myth-maker, a poetic pioneer", Dr. Stuart P. Sherman who edits this volume of Joaquin Miller's "Poetical Works" (Putnam) calls his hero. The poems themselves are of especial interest after a reading of Dr. Sherman's account of their writer and the various influences exerted upon him. Many of the poems are narrative in character, and still more are set in western scenes. There is little variety of verse form, but there is much and lavish beauty mingled, here and there, with sentimentality and overemphatic rhythm. Even in the most erring of them one comes upon memorable lines, and recognizes the sincerity and vigor of this pioneer who was born in a covered wagon, and who spent his last years on the hills overlooking San Francisco Bay.

Could a man who is interested in such diverse subjects as is Arnold Bennett fail to be himself an interesting subject? Although the title of "Things That Have Interested Me — Second Series" (Doran) puts the emphasis on the "things", the real hero is Mr. Bennett, with his gift of seeing into the soul of the commonplace. He discusses men, events, objects, and ideas with the self-revealing informality of a personal letter, and gets a calm but satisfying joy out of doing it. In this mood he and the reader are one, for the pleasant hours that went into the making of the book are as nothing compared to the pleasant hours that will be spent in reading it.

An unusual group of poems is Wilbur Snow's "Maine Coast" (Harcourt, Brace), simple, straightforward, objective, setting forth in metre, unrhymed for the most part, the beauty and humanity of a little village of "moon-white houses and big red barns" along the sea. Many of the poems are a boy's remembrance of the old men of the village visioned with sympathy and admiration, and portrayed with such homely detail as makes them very real to a reader. This is the author's first book. His second will be worth watching for.

The extravagant Egyptian craze following in the wake of the Carnarvon-Carter discoveries in the tomb of King Tut-Ankh-Amen has overwhelmed the market with books (that seem to spring up over night) about the ancient Thebans. Among the few volumes of informative value that have appeared is Arthur Weigall's "The Glory of the Pharaohs" (Putnam), containing interesting and accurate facts written by a keen student who for years studied his subject at an advantageous proximity as the former Inspector General of Antiquities for Upper Egypt. Mr. Weigall states that the former inhabitants of the Nile were "a gay and frivolous people, fond of dancing and red wine"; not the serious people of stern and sombre mien heretofore portrayed.

A strong vein of sympathetic understanding and appreciation has been

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woven into E. M. Tenison's biography of Louise Imogen Guiney (Macmillan), for years her intimate friend and correspondent. It is a scholarly study of a singular personality — a purist; strong, forceful, yet tender and compassionate; a devout Catholic of high and noble spirit; a champion of lost causes, and reviver of forgotten names of her "beloved yesterdays", mentally living within the careers of the men she so painstakingly portrayed. Miss Tenison's selection of excerpts from her subject's writings, manifesting lyrical spontaneity and perfect execution of the art, should win Miss Guiney many new readers.

In "Things That Are Mine" (Steen Hinrichsen) Scottie McKenzie Frasier trills cheerfully and unabashedly over a few slurred and time worn poetic roundelays. Like the indefatigable robin — which bird might be called her mascot, so often does she wear it on her shoulder — Mrs. Frasier's song is yellow billed and trite, verging on the quack, bare of distinction save for an occasional felt word or phrase. It is this unrelieved authority, this brightness, this alertness which is the despairing feature of her verse. One feels that the author, like the robin, is too busy being assertive to listen to the secret stilly singing whence proceeds real creation.

Makeshifts of letter form do not conceal the fact that Zora Putnam Wilkins's "Letters of a Business Woman" (Marshall Jones) are a series of preachments that take into account no relation of mother and daughter except that of a business adviser and his client. The Woman's letters have the condescending air of a textbook on business success, while her daughter's contribution is a how-I-won-my-way story with the usual substitution of a sentimental dénouement instead of the commercial success which alone might have justified the book as a stenographer's guide. If, by any chance, the author's final turning of the tables was intentionally ironical, the book is cleverer than it seems.

Were it not that Charles Hanson Towne gives something of the effect of being determinedly charming at any cost, "Ambling Through Acadia" (Century) might be more nearly an ideal travel work. As it is, it is delightful. Mr. Towne's Acadia is no Longfellow land (to quote the tourist folders) of forests primæval but a place of blossoming apple orchards, sunny sands, quiet fishing villages, and lilac bushes. He delighted in Halifax, concerning which other travelers have spoken ungently. And he insisted on having a glorious time, to the annoyance apparently of his fellow travelers. At any rate, the annoyance fails to reveal itself in the illustrations of William Heitland who went along.

A volume of concentrated wit, satire, and philosophy that can no more be taken in large doses than bouillon tablets can be consumed by the score, is to be found in "The Wisdom of Balzac" by Harry Rickel (Putnam). This collection of epigrams, aphorisms, and witty sayings taken not only from the "Human Comedy" but from the private letters and personal statements of Balzac, tends to justify the opinion of Michael Monahan who, in the preface, declares of the great French novelist, "Incidental to his fiction, he has set down a body of *marginalia*, pithy epigrams, sagacious counsels of life, intuitions of human destiny, many-faceted diamonds of wisdom and wit, the like of which

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cannot be duplicated from any other modern writer." Here are two examples, selected at random:

> Evil, no doubt, is a form of good of which the results are not immediately manifest.

> Perhaps thoughts and feelings are strongest in those who have but few of them, simply because they have but few.

A part of what America is contributing to the world's supply of light verse fills "Poems from 'Life'" (Macmillan). Oliver Herford has dug from the files of that journal what he considers the best metrical material it has published. He has written an introduction and Charles B. Falls has done a bit of illustrating. One wonders how some of the verses won this book appearance, while being grateful that others have been revived. All in all, it is just what "Life" is. If one smiles with that periodical, he will smile with these familiar contributors in their earlier work.

An impression of frenzied imitative extravaganza, in some cases strained and tiresome, in others a brilliant blend of execution and wit — such does one cull from "Parodies on Walt Whitman" (American Library Service). It is ostensibly not the aim of these parodies to reflect the deep resounding core which is Whitman's contribution to art, but to clothe some ridiculous parallel in the master's peculiar and characteristic medium. There is a fearful and wonderful disparity in the matter and manner of these parodies; from H. C. Bunner's "Home Sweet Home with Variations" to the "Chant Pagan" and "Epithalamium" is a far and faint cry. Many swing out from the shore of sense, borne by the strong tidal current of overwhelming style, others struggle for the flow and lose it, a few do succeed and, by a springing felicity of wit united to a rush and beat of verse, achieve a sounding joyousness that would have wrung a chuckle from old Walt himself.

Clark Wissler's "Man and Culture" (Crowell) is an elaboration of a number of lectures, the object of which was to interpret the results of anthropological research and thus to present the problems and the scope of anthropology as a science. It makes available to the general public data that has to a large extent been confined until now to special reports and technical discussions of original investigations. In the first part of his book Dr. Wissler clears the ground, defining culture as any, instead of merely our own, mode of life; in the second he describes its form and content, the patterns which it assumes, the methods by which it is acquired, transmitted and diffused, and its actual historical development; and in the third he discusses its relation to man, his environment, his behavior and his ideas.

The great development of Palestine as a Jewish homeland since the world war has almost obliterated the memory of the Zionist colony there before the war. In "The Feet of the Messenger" (Jewish Publication Society) Yehoash, the Yiddish author, who had lived there, gives a series of portraits of the colony. Isaac Goldberg's translation is not to be accused of smacking of the Yiddish idiom, but it has the peculiar quality of much of the writing in Jewish periodicals in the English language. This is no great drawback, but it is doubtful if the charm of the writing is sufficient to attract anyone not interested in the subject matter.

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The reminiscences of Solomon Bulkley Griffin, for forty years editor of the Springfield "Republican", run through his book "People and Politics" (Little, Brown) and make most interesting reading. The newspaper side of American history is a large one, and New England for so many years played a prominent part in selecting and directing our statesmen, that the discussion of that period, from the 'sixties through the 'nineties, comes best from a New Englander. Mr. Griffin's wide acquaintance and his fine insight enable him to present his characters and draw his conclusions with a fairness which lends distinction to his recollections and his underlying philosophy.

It is more or less the mode to laugh at old-fashioned persons who think Victoria's laureate was a poet. "Tennyson, a Modern Portrait" (Appleton) by Hugh I'Anson Fausset, mindful of the modish and the outmoded, sets out to give a real interpretation. The poet was, far more than his queen, typical of his age in life and works. The author so reveals him. "He never climbed Parnassus, striving year by year to approach the summit. Rather he sat musingly on one of its pleasant middle ridges where destiny and temperament had planted him," Mr. Fausset declares, and later says: "This was a man good, noble and true according to his lights, but his lights were dim and often clouded." Such a portrait fits well with the author's conception of civilization plunging bravely and blindly toward a world catastrophe.

Many people who visit London and Paris with the intention of acquainting themselves with the various points of interest in these cities, will scamper about aimlessly for weeks and on leaving find to their utter disappointment that they have missed almost everything of importance. To just such people the publication of Arthur Milton's "London in Seven Days" and its companion volume "Paris in Seven Days" (McBride) will come as the gift of the gods. One is guided through these cities with such great economy that there is not a lost moment nor a superfluous step, and not an interesting spot is passed unnoticed. It seems, however, that the perfect guide book has yet to make its appearance. These hasty little guides lack the photographs by which one may visualize one's route, although their jackets specify "illustrations". Maps are provided but no one of them covers the entire city. Intended primarily for "people in a hurry", these books can be used with equal advantage as the guide of the more leisurely.

Guy de Maupassant should be read along with those moderns who choose to emphasize sex; not, of course, as a counter irritant, but to show how far the English-writing moderns have yet to go to attain mastery in this field. He seems the perfect prestidigitator, manipulating his tricks with a skill that defies detection, while, in contrast, the moderns seem thick fingered magicians, bungling their acts and exposing the way in which they are done. Or, he might be said to handle his themes of passion as something one need not be afraid to talk about and, therefore, something that need not be clothed in ridiculously involved euphemisms. He never seems to grit his teeth and say: "Now is the time to shock them a little." If some of his tales are flippant, it is because, one feels, he knows that some loves are just that

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way. He handles passion as he handles death — his two favorite subjects — with the knowledge that both are inevitable and both should be met and used as they are. If some loves and some deaths are unpleasant, he does not try to perfume them with a bouquet of roundabout phrases, nor does he attempt to hide the beauty of other loves and other deaths by closing the door with asterisks. The third and fourth volumes of the typographically attractive Knopf set of Maupassant are "That Pig, Morin, And Other Stories", and "A Woman's Life", both excellently translated by Ernest Boyd. "Doctor Heraclius Gloss" (Brentano) is an early work of the same artist, printed in English for the first time — a translation by Jeffery E. Jeffery. In an introduction Ernest Boyd points out the tendency of the young writer to follow Voltaire before the permanent Maupassant method developed. Though interesting, this volume's chief value is for the student rather than for the amusement seeking reader. It does not seem like Maupassant at all.

Albert Bigelow Paine, Mark Twain's biographer, who these many years has been indefatigable in the collection, ordering, assorting, cataloguing, and embalming of Twain's "remains", publishes the final and authentic collection of "Mark Twain's Speeches" (Harper), uniform with the format of the Mark Twain volumes previously issued by the same publishers. The book is made up of eighty-four specimens of Mark Twain's wit and humor, expended upon such a characteristic variety of topics as "Woman", the press, "The Ladies", "The Weather", "The Babies", Adam, "Morals and Memory", "The Sandwich Islands", and "Accident Insurance". Mr. Paine writes a short introduction, and there is an appreciation by the late W. D. Howells.

The Song of Songs is the inspiration of Alexandre Kuprin's "Sulamith", "a prose poem of antiquity", translated from the Russian by B. Guilbert Guerney (Nicholas L. Brown). Here the story of Solomon's love for the naïve, lovely Shulamite peasant girl is considerably altered, amplified, and romanticized, and all with a skilful and entrancing simplicity. The erotic frankness of "Sulamith" in the hands of an Anglo-Saxon would win for the book an honored place on Everyman's little shelf of pornographia. M. Kuprin's handling of the love theme, however, is redeemed by a poetical delicacy which is probably considerably more contemplative and imaginative than the Bible version.

"Dead Souls" (Knopf) is the first delivery of a promised uniform set of Nikolay Gogol's works, translated by Constance Garnett. If the other translations are as well done as this one, the set should prove a valuable addition to the European works prepared for American unilinguists. The two volumes of "Dead Souls" are, in a fashion, a Russian "Main Street". With just enough story to bear the weight of the long descriptions and character sketches, Gogol has made a broad panorama of Russian life in the early nineteenth century. Sometimes, it seems, the story is too weak to bear the weight of the many, many words. The frequent sardonic laughs at his compatriots ease the heaviness of the long passages of description, however. How they did eat in those days! One finishes the book perplexed as to which was the greater — the appetite or the credulity of the Russians here caricatured so delightfully.

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THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

Four American Realists

FINDING no novel red hot from the presses that demands a reading, I turn to four slightly cooled. These four, in a measure, justify themselves, though only one seems to me a fine literary performance and only one other even approaches the standards of a good novel. The four are "West of the Water Tower", "Family", "Through the Wheat", and "Within These Walls". "Through the Wheat" (Scribner) by Thomas Boyd is the best of the lot, though it is by no means a novel. As a picture of the war it is far better than Dos Passos's "Three Soldiers", and far more terrible because it is well rounded. Here is the simple report of a simple soul and those like him around him. He fights, he drinks, he reads letters from home. His officers are now brutal, now remarkably tender human beings. The war to him is a vast, curious dream, pierced by "damn's" and the itch of vermin. If someone could have given Willa Cather Boyd's army hero William Hicks, for the last half of "One of Ours", we should have had a great American novel. Thomas Boyd writes competently. Occasionally he indulges in a passage that has a wistful poetical quality which stands out effectively from the drab colors of his report. The book is just that: a highly commendable report. It might all be true — perhaps it is. It is less a novel than "Three Soldiers" because it lacks the passionate drive and purpose of that onesided picture; it lacks the incident and color. Yet there is superb characterization in "Through the Wheat", and there is beauty because there is such noble truth. Willa Cather's hero discovers his soul in the war, Thomas Boyd's hero finds his soul mummified, yet somehow transfigured. There is much difference between Mr. Dos Passos and Mr. Boyd—the difference between a sensitive propagandist and a gallant hearted reporter. There is all the difference in the world between Thomas Boyd and Willa Cather — the difference between a man who knows and a woman who doesn't. But since the large public that has read "One of Ours" finds in it what that large public chooses to believe of war, I suspect that "Through the Wheat" will pass by it unnoticed.

The anonymous "West of the Water Tower" (Harper) which has been hailed by various critics as one of the finest novels of recent publication, is a mediocre piece of realistic writing, a commonplace and sentimental story. Apparently any author can achieve a *succès d'estime* these days if he will say: "Little Johnny's father didn't tell him anything about sex, therefore thus and so. . . ." Compare "West of the Water Tower" with Walpole's "The Cathedral". They are curiously alike. If the author of the former had been faithful to his idea of an evangelical preacher brought low by his own self-righteousness, he might have prospered greatly. As it is, the characterization of the preacher, Adrian Plummer, is the best thing in the book. As for the style, it is that curiously dry and unilluminated method of reporting that passes for fine writing under the name of

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modern realism. There is no memorable line. There is no face raised to beauty. There is no great description because there is no penetration beneath the surface of things. As for the question of sex matters handled frankly, I for one do not mind such allusions if they add to the story or are made beautiful because of their significance. Neither of these excuses do I find for the treatment of sex in "West of the Water Tower".

"Family" (Stokes) by Wayland Wells Williams seems to me to be an excellent novel, though a trifle too long for its theme. The picture of the grande dame of a Connecticut town ruling her rebellious brood is finely drawn. The young people are real, the events interesting. There is excellent dialogue, there is good suspense. This is certainly one of the best written books by a young American that we have had recently. Perhaps the reason may be found in the following paragraphs which point Williams's own artistic creed.

"You like romance, don't you?" said Nathan.

"I do not. That is, I do, but I don't demand it. I like both romance and realism, but not just photography."

Nathan briefly wanted to ask why, then, she had a lifesize photograph of the Roman Forum over the dining room sideboard. He said that the trouble with romance was that it was improbable, and with realism that it was boring.

"Yes," said Fortune drearily, "but then life is like that too. It's both realistic and romantic — improbable and boring. Oh, I can understand what makes people want romance! A little tin toy world, with every thing happening as it ought to!"

Nathan at this point became conscious of a change in her. It was deep and subtle, and puzzled him. "I should say that your life did go pretty much that way, Fortune."

"But of course it doesn't."

"I mean, it seems as though you *made* it that way. . . ."

There is just one thing that annoys. It seems too bad to quarrel with such a good book but, occasionally, I feel that the author gets in the way of his own thesis, the thesis that "Family" cannot, in the long run, rule life. There is an innate snobbishness in the following paragraph that no author should attribute to his hero. Besides, one does not talk to one's coachman this way, does one?

Miss Hale stood on the curb, her hand on the front door of the car. "Would you care to come back and eat some of the steak with us?" she said. "We'd like to have you. I know Father'll be delighted to talk motors with you." . . .

"And who may that young lady be?" said Tim as they drove home for Nathan to change.

"A prominent member of the middle classes. The ruling, or capitalistic classes, Tim. Your rulers, as well as mine."

"I wouldn't mind takin' the pay of such," said Tim. "Gorry, and maybe I'll be after doin' it, one o' these days!" he finished with a nudge and fearful ogle.

For Rupert Hughes's power of holding interest I have the greatest respect. His stories rush. They are filled with color and passion. They are vivid and clear. They are expert in the handling of incident and character. Yet "Within These Walls" (Harper) seems to me both hasty and unpleasant. It was intended to be unpleasant, so much so that it has been praised by no less a person than Mr. Ben Hecht of Chicago. The theme is the same as that of Mr. Williams's "Family" — the effort of a proud man to conceal the realities of his household from the world. In this case there is a real skeleton — in the chimney instead of the closet. Murder and rape do not terrify Mr. Hughes. They fit into his scheme with great ease. His historical facts of old New York are well marshaled. There is a good deal of charm in the background of this story, as there is a good deal that

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is not charming in its characters. Isn't it dangerous to handle so grim a theme with so dazzling and swift a touch? I think so. In some ways Mr. Hughes has written the skeleton of a great book. As it is, he has written a readable story, but an unpleasant and not a memorable one.

A Molder of Public Opinion

WHAT a sorry thing a collection of the casual writings of most editors would be! Or of most editorial writers for that matter. Yet in "The Editorials of Henry Watterson" (Doran) we have a picture of a man who not only wrote with ability and force but, who thought strenuously and sanely. These abilities we have directed on the problems of the world from 1868 to 1919. It is a rich period and it is a rich store. Arthur Krock furnishes illuminating notes that force attention to the background of the editorials. A fascinating book; a book that I have not read through but to which I shall turn again and again. I like particularly the following. It was published on February 19, 1918.

PROFANITY

The profanity of the "Courier-Journal" is abhorrent. — Christian Churchman.

"Those vehicles of disjointed thought", as Dr. Rush called them — the newspapers — were never more "disjointed", and, for the matter of that, as far as light and leading go, less "vehicular" than they seem just now. To say truth there is much to perplex the average space-writer doing his daily grind. Turn whichever way he will he encounters dragons; she-dragons and he-dragons; the wild geese of Woman Suffrage and the wet hens of Prohibition; not to mention the War. "He was a bold man", the Dean of St. Patrick's tells us, "who first ate an oyster." But he who tackles a reformer is a hero.

Yet, nevertheless and notwithstanding, the dissonance of the press may after all prove a good thing. Out of a multiplicity of counsels, we are assured, wisdom comes. The one essential point of agreement — that we are going to lick the Huns — that we are on the way to Berlin in Prussia and Vienna in Austria, not to mention Kalamazoo in the Black Forest and Kickapoo on the Rhine! — will be nowhere disputed. It is our desire to be explicit and we hope we make ourselves reasonably clear, when we say "to Hell with the Hohenzollerns and the Hapsburgs."

Is that the kind of profanity the "Christian Churchman" abhors? If it is we'll be hornswaggled if we don't repeat it six days in the week and twice on Sundays! There!

Revolution and Politics

REALLY to profit by "An Outlaw's Diary" (McBride) it would be necessary to know a great deal concerning European politics. Cécile Tormay is bitter. She reports the events which led to the crumbling of autocratic Hungary with stinging force. It is the diary not only of revolutionary events but of a woman's soul, and as the latter it interested me more. I do not think it very well written. It is graphic but jerky. Yet, while it is marked by the most complete partizanship, it has also the unmistakable accents of veracity. No page is free, however, from political discussion. On the whole, this is annoying to the ordinary reader. Granted that we are none of us in favor of red revolution — we may then proceed on that premise with events as they occurred. Miss Tormay resents and I do not wonder that she resents; but so many pages packed with resentment, while they make her character a most interesting one to study, do not make her book superlatively attractive either to the casual reader or to the student of history.

—*J. F.*

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association, in Cooperation with the Public Libraries of America

One is impressed — upon the appearance in the June monthly score of Mr. Bok's new book — with what may be termed the durability of the work of the former editor of "The Ladies' Home Journal". His own life story is now running in its thirty-first or thirty-second month of continuous appearance in the public library reports of books in demand. It slides up and down the scale of readers' preferences, but is always present. Now Mr. Bok leaps into the lists with a second entry, a book about his father-in-law and former employer, Mr. Curtis. It is a safe guess that "A Man from Maine" will prove as durable as the narrative of the author's own "Americanization", even though it lacks the confessional quality of the latter.

While Mr. Bok is thus doubling in brass, as it were, something has happened to an almost equally persistent denizen of the monthly score, A. S. M. Hutchinson. For the first time since, a couple of years ago, "If Winter Comes" popped up as a contender with "Main Street" for first place, none of his books shows up among the library favorites.

And there, in a manner of speaking, you are.—F. P. S.

FICTION

1.	Black Oxen	*Gertrude Atherton*	BONI
2.	The Enchanted April	*"Elizabeth"*	DOUBLEDAY
3.	The Cathedral	*Hugh Walpole*	DORAN
4.	His Children's Children	*Arthur Train*	SCRIBNER
5.	One of Ours	*Willa Cather*	KNOPF
6.	The Dim Lantern	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
7.	Babbitt	*Sinclair Lewis*	HARCOURT
8.	Wanderer of the Wasteland	*Zane Grey*	HARPER
9.	The Middle of the Road	*Philip Gibbs*	DORAN
10.	Faint Perfume	*Zona Gale*	APPLETON

GENERAL

1.	Life of Christ	*Giovanni Papini*	HARCOURT
2.	Life and Letters of Walter H. Page	*Burton J. Hendrick*	DOUBLEDAY
3.	Etiquette	*Emily Post*	FUNK & WAGNALLS
4.	The Mind in the Making	*James Harvey Robinson*	HARPER
5.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
6.	A Man From Maine	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
7.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
8.	The Outline of Science	*J. Arthur Thomson*	PUTNAM
9.	Up Stream	*Ludwig Lewisohn*	BONI
10.	Beasts, Men and Gods	*Ferdinand Ossendowski*	DUTTON

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IN THE BOOKMAN'S MAIL

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BOOKMAN:

Let me begin this reply to the paper of Allen Wilson Porterfield in your June number, under the heading: "Horum Omnium Fortissimi Sunt Belgæ", with the same statement as J. S. Untermeyer gives in the same number: It is seldom I pick up gauntlets.

As a foreigner, although not a stranger in the United States, I find it sometimes very amusing to look at American long range pictures of countries abroad. And if there is something wrong, I find comfort in supposing there was a hitch in the camera. If however the trouble has not been removed in a following picture, one is inclined to suppose there is something wrong with the camera man also.

When I read the statement of Allen Wilson Porterfield in THE BOOKMAN of March, that Flemish was "a rather flat and thick tongue", I asked myself if the writer of this article was the same as the maker of "German Romanticism", and if there was a difference in thickness and flatness between the different Germanic languages.

But now I see that the same writer goes on with the same matter in the June number and makes some more "foreign notes and comment". I feel obliged to "pick up the gauntlet" and to ask this writer not to consider his opponent as a "Flemish enthusiast" but as a teacher of modern Germanic languages in Belgium and a defender of truth.

I do not like to make comments on American situations because I do not feel I have a right to speak about this matter in general, even after a stay of almost a year in this country. I left Belgium some ten months ago; I fought in the language struggle some fifteen years; I always kept feeling with the country, intending to go back next month. So I suppose I have some right to speak about language questions in Belgium. I do not know where the writer got his information about this question. He seems however to have used the same sources I discovered in several wrong statements in different papers of this country.

In general it is not so easy for a citizen of this new world to get thoroughly acquainted with situations in the old one, especially when these are interwoven with political, religious, social and other questions. And one would suppose that a writer about these facts should not lose sight of discretion. Dumbfounded by the statement that the Flemish people in Belgium "seem willing to risk the very unity of their country in order to carry their point", I was very glad to see the writer more cautious in his assertion that "the language of Belgium, civic and educational, should be, *it would seem from a distance,* French". I fully agree with him that "one's mother tongue is the articulate and articulated breath from off one's soul"; that "one's mother tongue is infinitely more than merely the medium of thought expression."

This, however, does not tally with the first affirmation. And in order to prove my statement I am glad to give a summary of the official government returns about the languages in Belgium, based on the census of 1920 (children under two years are considered as speaking no language).*

Speaking Flemish only:	3,187,073
Speaking French only:	2,856,835
Speaking German only:	16,875
Speaking Flemish and French:	960,960
Speaking French and German:	45,073
Speaking French, German and Flemish:	34,158
Speaking none of these three languages:	305,115
Inhabitants speaking several languages but using generally	
Flemish:	609,637
French:	407,333
German:	24,364

The addition of the persons speaking exclusively French, Flemish, or German, and those who declared to use usually only one language although speaking several, gives:

Flemish:	3,796,690
French:	3,263,168
German:	41,543

The number of the people able to speak Flemish is then:	3,187,073
	960,960
	34,158
	4,182,191

The number of the people able to speak French:	2,856,835
	960,960
	45,074
	3,862,869

The number of people speaking several national languages amounts to 1,042,539; or 14.08 percent inhabitants.

*We print these figures exactly as Dr. Kreemers gives them.

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Of the number declaring to speak several national languages, 39.07 percent speak usually French; 58.47 percent usually Flemish, and 2.46 percent German. It would take me too far afield to explain how much has been bungled in the gathering of these figures, especially in Brussels and in other cities where capitalism, political influences, fear, and the behavior of a suborned police affected many who, descended from the Flemish race and speaking Flemish in their domestic circle, consider the mention of this language as their mother tongue dangerous for their position in life, not fit for higher circles, etc. But I am sure that these returns fall short of the true situation.

A conscientious examination of these figures will make null and void the statement that, even seen from a distance, French should be the civic and educational language of Belgium. If Porterfield advocates the unification of a country by means of *one* language as in Alsace by the Germans and the French, he had better chosen another adjective, f. i. "political" language. He certainly knows German enough to see how much better the Flemish translation of the Belgian national device is than the original French one. "Eendracht maakt Macht" is not so ambiguous as "L'Union fait la Force" especially now that many do not see any more the difference between "union" and "unification".

Where more than three millions of citizens speak only and usually Flemish, the civic language should not be French. Where more than three millions of people speak only and usually Flemish, the educational language should not be French. Considering besides that children under two years are not included in these figures; that families of ten and twelve children are not exceptional in the Flemish part of the country but that two or three children are the general rule in the French or Walloon part of Belgium, the future is certainly brighter for the Flemish than for the French.

Why should not three millions of people, educated in Flemish in the lower grades, have a right to higher education in Flemish? Why should Walloons have a right to four universities and the Flemish not a right to one? Why is it "a pity" that a majority in the Belgian parliament, composed of Flemish and French, voted for a Flemish university in Ghent? As a Flemish volunteer in the world war I like to speak from the point of view of justice rather than from other points of view because I have the duty of asking right for my Flemish people after fighting for right in general. The unity of the country, the hobby of Mr. Porterfield, is only so long at a risk as right is refused to that Flemish part of Belgium which furnished more than eighty percent of the Belgian soldiers fighting for the freedom of the native country.

Among the other reasons why a Flemish university is not "a pity" let me give only this one: we were sent in the last attack on the German barbed wires with a royal promise of a Flemish university. And the blood of the battlefields is something sacred, not to be undone by words but confirmed by deeds.

It is quite so as Mr. Porterfield says: "the language situation is fraught with graver problems in Belgium than in any other country." The chief reason is that the battle rages between two very high civilizations. But, although the Flemish language is a Germanic language, one must not mix up "Germanic" and "German". English is a Germanic language too. But nobody speaks of a German danger in the Anglo-Saxon world. The "Flemish movement" may be a "Germanic" movement; but certainly it is not, as a foreign correspondent of the Chicago "Tribune" pointed out some time ago, a "German" movement.

If several Flemish men accepted German help during the war, in the getting of their Flemish rights, they are not to be blamed for that right but only for the accepting of it out of the hands of an enemy when their fellow countrymen fought against that same foe, hoping to receive the reward for their faithfulness and their rights from a reestablished government.

After five years of patience and forbearance, I am more than ever convinced that it is not "a pity" but a national duty as well as a national benefit to give a right waited for almost a century, and to establish a Flemish university nowhere else than in Ghent, the focus of all Flemish thoughts and aspirations.

To conclude let me tell Mr. Porterfield that the Flemish language is only a part of the Dutch spoken by more than twelve millions of people in the northern part of Belgium, in the Netherlands, South Africa, etc. And in order to prove that the Flemish, or Dutch, although "thick and flat" in the eyes of Mr. Porterfield, is none the less a very valuable instrument for the expression of human feelings, beauty, and even science, I ask Mr. Porterfield to make a careful study of English literature, especially in the seventeenth century, particularly of Milton who did not find it beneath his dignity as an English poet to imitate the "flat and thick" tongue of Vondel. Let Mr. Porterfield think of the fact that his ancestors in this country received almost their first civilization from this "flat and thick" speaking people; that even before the sailing of Columbus the Flemish people had

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reached a cultural height he can only envy even in this century; that it is fair for us to respect the schemers of our glory in the same "flat and thick" tongue they spoke centuries ago.

Let Mr. Porterfield think of some recent literary works in that "flat and thick tongue" he can enjoy now "translated from the Dutch", f. i. Couperus and Van Eeden, who are only two "of a group whose significance is world wide, and who will be universally appreciated when the barriers of language have been broken down by more general translation as has been the case with the Russians and some of the Scandinavians" (A. Symmers, THE BOOKMAN, December, 1922).

Let Mr. Porterfield look over the list of the Nobel prizes, consider the names of Lorentz, Zeeman, Van der Waals, Kamerlingh Onnes, Van't Hoff, and think of the influence of the "flat and thick" tongue of these scholars from out their chairs not only over the Anglo-Saxon world.

Let Mr. Porterfield think of Maartens, Van Loon, etc., who certainly do not write English because they consider their mother tongue "flat and thick" and who certainly were helped by their tongue in the getting of a more practical instrument in the service of the Anglo-Saxon cause.

Let Mr. Porterfield have more respect for the "flat and thick" speaking Flemish and Dutch, nearer to his world than a people he seems to give a preference, and who are perhaps the best students and supporters of English as *the coming* world language.

RAPH. KREEMERS
Ph. D., Litt. D.,
Graduate Fellow, University of Chicago.

DEAR MR. EDITOR:

I am twenty-two years old and have just completed my first reading of "Leaves of Grass". I feel as if a clean, rushing wind, sprayed with yellow sunshine, had been blowing over and through me. But I am suffused with shame and with indignation. Why did the hidebound old college which I attended allow me to leave its Presbyterian halls with a Bachelor's degree and the idea that Walt Whitman was an old chap who looked something like his glorious superior, Longfellow, and wrote a poem once about his captain? Why don't these schools of ours give us a chance at a few poems besides "Hiawatha" and "We Are Seven"?

I have just asked my husband this question. He is the Principal Person of one of our city schools. He said, "Suppose I should give to one of my nice polite teachers up there on the hill the job of putting across to a class 'The Children of Adam'. Just how many quarts of lake water do you think it would take to revive her?"

I suppose he is right, but why, Mr. Editor, *why?* I hate nastiness in any writer but Whitman isn't nasty—brutally frank, of course, but if he isn't purgative of every kind of littleness and meanness and filth, where exists a poet who is?

I cannot understand this cut and desiccated system of study. Why did my college make me read ghastly bits of "The Duchess of Malfi" and stupid scenes from "She Stoops to Conquer", but leave me to discover for myself "The Land of Heart's Desire" and "Riders to the Sea"? Why did it drill me faithfully in "Come Into the Garden, Maud", and never even mention the author of

"I heard the old, old men say,
'All that's beautiful drifts away,
Like the waters' "—

Why didn't my psychology professor let me read "Crime and Punishment" as collateral reading instead of spending a month on the Young-Helmholtz color theory? Why, Mr. Editor, when I left school I had never heard of Yeats or Hardy or Synge or Dostoyevsky or Nietzsche or Anatole France. Or Mr. Mencken. I had read but one of de Maupassant's stories and could not even pronounce Balzac or Turgenev or Flaubert. The only poem of Blake's I had ever read was "Tiger, Tiger", and I thought that American poetry had given up the ghost when Longfellow died. And in spite of this illiteracy I was graduated magna cum laude, after four years of a literature course, from a fully accredited middle western college.

Why is this, Mr. Editor? Were my good professors ignorant of so much that is real and fine and beautiful? Were they cramped by bourgeois conventions, afraid of starting something not as yet staled by custom? Or did they merely lack, sadly, that which Mr. Symonds has termed Cosmic Enthusiasm?

Naturally, the Whitmanic creed or the novels of Dreiser would be rather strong medicine for high school or grade youngsters, but verily, verily, Mr. Editor, if our colleges do not find, and that right soon, a better mental food for their men and women than the sugartit twaddle with which they are sloshed today, heaven deliver us from the pap-fed race of emasculate invertebrates which the future generations must inevitably become.

Honestly, Mr. Editor, isn't it a problem worth tackling? Could you manage to get hold of someone—say Mr. Mencken—perhaps gentle him down a little out of regard for the good professors, and—well, sort of sic him at it?

Very respectfully yours,
R. M.

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FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

Notes from France

THE last election at the French Academy does justice at last to a man whose absence from this exalted company amounted to a scandal.

It is the opinion of many that Georges de Porto-Riche is the greatest living French dramatist. In fact, I see only Paul Claudel who could also pretend to that title — with entirely different qualifications.

Porto-Riche, the new academician, is a picturesque figure, who belongs with Casanova, Musset, and the heroes of romantic romance. Play writing was neither his principal occupation nor his most successful one in a worldly sense; his plays were refused many times, by many producers, even after his talent was recognized: they never were big money making propositions. But the man Porto-Riche has probably known few obstacles and few disappointments in the course of his life. Refined to the utmost degree, seducing, irresistible, with a streak of the feminine in his sensibility and delicacy yet decidedly a he-man in his behavior — Porto-Riche did not have to go far in order to find a model for his heroes in "Le Passé", in "Amoureuse", in "Le Vieil Homme", his three masterpieces. Which does not mean that art and choice do not play a capital part in the writing of his "Théâtre d'Amour": nothing is further from improvisation and carelessness. For years and years, the author has worked on each of these plays, and on the plays of the "Théâtre d'Amitié" which are yet unproduced. Some people do not like Porto-Riche, because they disagree with the morals of his characters. Other people dislike him because he has been truthful to the point of indiscretion. But those who love a sensitive portraying of passion's changing shades, of its mysterious weaknesses, of its almighty sway over some predestined characters, will read and reread these plays, conceived and written under the sign of Aphrodite. . . .

A new page has been added to the chapter "Literary Quarrels": the winner of the last Goncourt Prize, Henri Béraud, who writes in the daily paper "L'Eclair", started a regular offensive against the literary stronghold of the "Nouvelle Revue Française". For several weeks, attacks and answers in the Béraud-"N. R. F." dispute have been raging. Enemies of the "N. R. F." are quite a few, but, like the opponents of the Church according to Chesterton, they don't seem to agree as to the particular fault on which the blame should lie, nor as to which of the "N. R. F." authors should be exterminated (they are too many and too different for a wholesale execution).

Some find that Gide is too highbrow, some say that Claudel is dull, some object to Giraudoux's being frivolous, some to Pierre Hamp's being a radical, some to the whole set's being too penetrated with its own authority. It is typical of the attacks against the "Nouvelle Revue Française" that its contributors should have been charged with the sin of "catholicism" (Claudel or Mauriac), of "protestantism" (Schlumberger), and of "satanism" (Gide).

In answering a critic, André Gide said:

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Charles-Louis Philippe, Proust, Valéry, Claudel, Larbaud, Romains — you may say that these authors bore you, tire you, make you sick. . . . It may be true (although I shall not insult you by believing it). But do not say that they form a "chapel", that they obey the same password, that they are grouped under one flag — because it is not true.

But critics are not so blind as they seem to the real qualities of the "N. R. F." writers, since Henri Béraud was prominent among those who defended Gide's "Saül" when it was produced in Paris last year. In the meantime, as a recognition of the profitable advertisement that such a quarrel brings to his name, Gide has sent to Béraud a huge box of the best chocolates he could find. . . . At the time we write, the gift has not yet been acknowledged. But the quarrel seems to be dying out.

"Eupalinos", the Platonic dialogues written by Paul Valéry, followed by his dialogue on "Dance and the Soul", has appeared at last. It is now available in a current edition, but this may be out of print in a short time, as happened in the case of "Charmes", Valéry's book of poems, now hard to find on the market. Almost simultaneous with the publication of "Eupalinos", and of Valéry's preface to a new edition of Poe's "Eureka" (Revue Européenne), is that of "Vanikoro", the second book of poems by Lucien Fabre, who is Valéry's direct disciple — this was already shown in "Connaissance de la Déesse", his first volume. And at the same time, we receive a book of lyrical portraits, called "La Figure", by Adrienne Mounier, containing literary images of Fargue, Gide, Larbaud, Romains, etc., and of Valéry himself in his own manner.

Leaving poets, polemists, and dramatists aside, if we turn to the novel we shall have to mention "Ellen et Jean" by Gaston Rion (we shall deal again with this book), "Aventures de Sylvain Dutour" by Emile Henriot, "La Détresse des Harpagon" by Pierre Mille, "La Mer Rouge" by Maximilienne Heller. The book of the month is undoubtedly Jean Cocteau's first novel, "Le Grand Ecart". Cocteau, who is famous as a poet, as a promoter of art movements, as a coach to the team of the "Six Musicians", and as a lively and prominent figure in Paris art circles, now comes out as a prose writer of the highest rank. This novel may not be the result of a painful effort: Cocteau's best is produced through fantasy and improvisation rather than effort. But it is none the less a result of careful and intelligent selection of elements. There is a superstition as to effort for effort's sake, which has replaced the old superstition of facility as being the sign of genius. What matters in the making of a work of art is neither pain nor pleasure, it is *choice*. "Le Grand Ecart" shows constant, watchful discrimination in the presentation of characters and episodes. There are voluntary gaps and silences, bridged over by implicit consent of the reader to the author's elliptic and elegant *raccourcis*.

Cocteau is sober and prodigal. When he chooses to eliminate, it is almost to the point of obscurity. But when he keeps you waiting — you wonder what he is doing — he is lighting a rocket; a master of verbal engineering, he excels in the lavish use of creative images and comparisons. Those who insist on measuring his achievements according to common standards of orderly composition, real or false humility, patient progressing along beaten tracks, had better abandon the task. Cocteau has been the miracle boy of a generation; he is now becoming a real leader and an authentic great writer. He is, in our day, some-

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thing like Oscar Wilde in his time. Which means, of course, that he is nothing like Oscar Wilde.

Ramón Gómez de la Serna, the Spanish novelist and essayist, recently translated by Larbaud, paid a short visit to his Paris friends, who gave a banquet for him, for John Dos Passos, and for Willa Cather, also in Paris. This took place at the Cercle Littéraire International — alias the Paris Pen Club — whose activity and success, under the leadership of Benjamin Crémieux, have been one of the features of this season.

As we are about to mail these notes, the news reaches us of the death of Pierre Loti. The young have perhaps been unfair to him. He was a true poet, by the quality of his vision and by his love of beautiful forms. If the new generation owes him little, it should not be forgotten that our parents found inspiration in his early works. "Pêcheur d'Islande", "Mon Frère Yves", "Le Roman d'un Spahi", and "Le Mariage de Loti" (which was the first revelation of the South Seas in French letters) will remain as masterpieces of harmonious prose and as pioneer books in modern exotic literature.

PIERRE DE LANUX

Memoirs and a German Decameron

THE Germans keep extraordinary festivals. A living author is honored every decade, from fifty onward, with increasing honors. Birth centenaries, even of foreigners, are naturally celebrated, but who ever heard of celebrating the seventy-fifth death day? This was the occasion which caused the Westphalians to unite in solemn conclave in the great Session Chamber of the Reichstag to do honor to that stirring balladist, delicate prose stylist, and deep and tender woman poet — Annette Droste-Hülshoff, whose temperament and lyric accomplishment might be compared with those of Christina Rossetti. Seldom were the stubborn, hardheaded, reticent Westphalians — men slow to make friends but who never forget a friend or an enemy — found in such a gentle mood. They spoke not of the greatness or genius of "Baroness von Droste-Hülshoff", but of the undying charm and winning quality of "our Annette", who ranks as one of the most distinctive figures among nineteenth century woman writers and who died in the "Freedom Year", 1848. Two equally attractive reprints of her most famous prose work, that strange, haunting romance of crime and conscience, "Die Judenbuche", reeking, like all her work, of the warm red Westphalian earth, have recently been published, one by the Amalthea Verlag, Vienna, one by the Deutsche-Meister Verlag, Munich.

A new book of memoirs which is arousing considerable interest and talk is the reminiscences of Prince Philipp Eulenburg, published by Gebrüder Paetel, Berlin. The lively old gentleman, whose book is entitled "Aus Fünfzig Jahren" (Memories of Fifty Years), brings his memories to a close with the year 1890, so that readers who hope to read of the Eulenburg scandal case as presented by Eulenburg himself, will be disappointed. There is plenty of other piquant material, however, and it would be especially amusing to read the book in conjunction with Bismarck's reminiscences and observe the clash between the poet, art lover, æsthete, and diplomat of the Machiavellian school and the bluff, gruff Iron Chancellor. Eulen-

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burg gives lively descriptions of the feud between Bismarck, who thought Wagner "a monkey" and had no patience with his music, and his next door neighbor, the accomplished and highly cultured Frau Mimi von Schleinitz, who was largely responsible for the foundation of the Wagnerian Festspiele at Bayreuth and whose nightly receptions formed a salon where all that counted in literary, artistic, and musical Berlin was wont to foregather. Young Eulenburg's poems were recited here; Prince and Princess Frederick, whom Bismarck so hated and whose interest in things artistic was deep and sincere, were frequent guests. Next door the old Chancellor fretted alone and his wife raked up the various peppery stories current about the family of the radiant and successful Mimi.

Very fascinating is the account which Eulenburg gives of the beautiful Empress Augusta, the Kaiser's grandmother, who was transplanted like a southern flower out of the literary and poetic environment of Weimar, where as a young girl she had been saturated with the "Goethe atmosphere", into the chilly regions of the Prussian court, where even the royal ballet danced in "uniform" and poetry was regarded as a useless appendage to the serious business of drill and parades. Her privy councilor said of the Empress Augusta: "She was born to be an Empress, and we shall never again have such a one", and Prince Eulenburg approvingly quotes this judgment upon another of the women that Bismarck hated.

There is no other book at the moment which can vie in interest with these reminiscences, but there are various publications worthy of note. Kasimir Edschmid, the expressionist author of that whirlwind romance "Die Achatnen Kugeln" (Bullets of Agate), has written another book of literary criticism and bookish talk as a companion to his much discussed "Double-Headed Nymph". This one is called "Die Bücher-Dekameron" (Erich Reiss, Berlin). The idea is pleasantly original. A party of mountain climbers is snowed up in an Alpine Hut and beguiles the time, not with erotic stories, but with brilliant bookish chatter. Edschmid's style is as expressionistically difficult as ever, and disguises rather than illuminates the mazes of his thought. But not a little entertainment, enlightenment, and food for endless discussions can be gleaned from his book. The section devoted to contemporary foreign literature is especially intriguing. Edschmid picks out the contemporary Englishmen that impress him most and characterizes them with a few happily chosen phrases — as when he defines G. K. Chesterton, "the cleverest man in England", as "half prelate and half circus jockey". The others are, naturally, Shaw, Wells, and Kipling ("Savonarola of the militarists"). America is still an unknown land for this lively author. He gives his readers only one name, one which, oddly enough, is a symbol of American contemporary literature in many a German mind — Upton Sinclair!

As tonic, antidote, or sleeping draft — according to how one has been affected by the brilliant but precious Edschmid — one may read the history of newer German literature, "Deutsche Dichtung in Neuer Zeit", by Friedrich von der Leyen (Diederichs, Jena). Here the reader will find practically everything which Edschmid holds up for admiration attacked and condemned, and Edschmid himself coming in for a particularly heavy damnation. This is one of the amusing factors

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about German intellectual life. It is intensely and incurably partizan, and the interested foreigner who keeps his sympathies intact may stand above the feuds and enjoy the wit and wrath so unnecessarily expended upon every side. Von der Leyen is thorough and comprehensive and an excellent guide to the older pioneers of the younger school, such as Dehmel, von Hofmannsthal, Rilke. He gives many representative poems and extracts, and when one reads again such a wonderful thing of beauty as von Hofmannsthal's "Ballade des Ausseren Lebens", one is filled with regret that this master singer seems to have been struck dumb. There lies before us, to be sure, a book shimmering in electric blue which bears the glamour of his name — "Griechenland" by Holdt and von Hofmannsthal (Wasmuth, Berlin), but it is only a volume of glorious sepia photographs of the ancient Greek remains, the Parthenon, Acropolis, and the rest, Greek landscape and life of today, with an illuminating introduction in prose from the poet's hand. It is good, but a poor substitute for new poems. The idea of the book is to give the untraveled a true picture of the landscape, even the spiritual landscape, in which the amazing remnants of a vanished civilization were once set, and one can say that the end has been achieved. The texts beneath the pictures are printed in English, German, and French.

The former Crown Prince Rupert of Bavaria is publishing two books. Surprisingly enough, they are not political memoirs, but dashing accounts of travels in India and the East with many striking illustrations. They are published by Kösel, Kempten.

Curiosities of literature are the works of Dr. Max Kemmerich, of which new and revised, enlarged editions are issued. This man of learning has found a particular fascination in the odd byways of history. He has two volumes of "Kultur-Kuriosa", published by Langen (Munich), which give us strange glimpses of the ancientness of some modern devices but far more appalling revelations of the extreme newness of what we are accustomed to call decency and good manners, and which throw many a piquant or wicked sidelight upon the realities of history. "Dinge die Man Nicht Sagt" (Things that Are Not Told), also published by Langen, is the bold fight of a philosophic moralist against the manifold hypocrisies of modern life. Then there are two volumes "Gespenster und Spuk" and "Prophezeiungen", the first of which, published by Haus Lhotzky, Ludwigshafen, Bodensee, contains a fascinating collection of accredited ghost stories, with all possible proofs — some English, some German, some French, some from other sources — brought together with the definite purpose of convincing the reader of the reality of spiritualistic telepathy. "Prophecies" (Albert Langen) is an anthology of prophecies of all times and nations, some of which are remarkably to the point, others beside the mark, arranged to show that there is, in popular phrase, "something in it". Instructive these books certainly are, amusing no less, but amazing most of all.

While Georg Kaiser's "Flucht nach Venedig" with its preciosity of language and unreality of motive was a disappointment for his admirers, his new drama on the subject of Joan of Arc, "Gilles and Jeanne" (Kiepenheuer, Potsdam), rehabilitates him and marks a further step in his dramatic progress. There are, to be sure, forced passages in the dialogue, but

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the dramatic power of the happenings is impressive even in the reading, and will certainly be still more so on the stage. The trial scene, with its mystic and symbolic touches, will be a task after the heart of many a modern expressionistic or impressionistic producer. The most hopeful thing about the new drama, however, is that it has recaptured the human touch which has been missing from the Kaiser plays since the enthralling "Gas".

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

Fundamentalists of the Fjords

THE metropolitan press of Monday, June 18, carried the usual batch of stories based on the commencement sermons of Sunday, June 17. The outstanding feature of these sermons was their similarity. The theme in each case was inerrant dogma; the content can be condensed into a few lines. Dogma retards; the coming generation refuses, and with right, to become interested in it. You cannot hold the attention of the young by playing with shibboleths in 1923 when the south, that is, merely the southeast, is spending more money on public education than the country as a whole was spending in 1883. There are individual states which have as many high schools in 1923 as there were in the entire Union forty years ago, and the best of these offer a course of study about equal to that offered by Harvard College forty years ago. With all of our ills, national and international, truth is coming. Don't be afraid of it; welcome it.

On May 26, "Politiken" of Copenhagen published an article by Dr. Ditlef Nielsen on the virgin birth of Christ in which the point was made that such birth was referred to in only two of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, and that even in these the reference is in discord with the general teachings of the books in question. In other words, we are apt to fancy that this debate that is now going on between what may be called the liberals and the conservatives (the latter are convinced that the former are heterodox, just as the former feel that the latter are not keeping up with the high schools) is unique. We are apt to lose sight of the fact, if we ever glimpsed it, that this discussion is worldwide, that it did not start with us, that it is not going to end with us, and that this is not the only country in which high schools are increasing in number with reassuring rapidity.

There is Scandinavia. All that applies to America in this connection applies to her. It is consequently a privilege to introduce a Scandinavian writer whose name is at present utterly unknown in this country, though it may be a familar one in a few years. I mean Peter Lykke-Seest, born at Christiania on September 26, 1868, living at present at Bygdö, just across the fjord from the Norwegian capital, author of novels, dramas, and poems, and now enjoying the gratitude of his countrymen for his latest creation, "Den Store Hvite Flok" (The Great White Fold), a novel of 276 pages, published by Aschehoug of Christiania.

It is the story of a stout Norwegian who had been destined by his parents for the ministry. His father and mother are wealthy, as wealth goes in Norway, and determined to leave nothing undone to give him a good formal education. He accepts their paternal benevolence. He has to. He enters the ministry. It would have been fatal to

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his parents had he not done so. He leaves it, decently and in order, when he sees that not to do so will be fatal to his own soul if not to the souls of his parishioners. It may be that better novels than this one have been written on this great question within recent years, but if so I have not read them.

We meet the hero, Jakob Haugen, at a prayer meeting in Christiania. Pastor Jensen, smooth, well dressed, well paid, an organization man to the last ripple of the flag, asks Jakob, at the end of the services, to try his heart at comforting an unfortunate young woman who is in the hospital sick unto insanity. Pastor Jensen himself has tried to console her, but she merely raged the more at the sight of him. He explains to Jakob, still an unordained candidate, the precise relation of God to the woman. Jakob, however, is quite familiar with the "facts of her case". He does not go; not then.

His youth has been a period of too much duty and too little love. At fifteen, he has an affair with a girl which ends with a kiss. He feels that he has sinned against God. His father takes him with him to the old home in the north. It is a visit in the interest of the father's personal recuperation. For Jakob it is a few months of physical growth and spiritual expansion. He learns to love nature. On his return he again enters school and again stands at the head of the class. He has another little love affair such as any man has at his age who is not made of putty and cheese. Then Olga, the ugly though kindhearted daughter of a neighbor, is taken into his home by his parents. The Haugens have only one child, Jakob. Olga is to become his wife; for she is good. She says grace at the table and leads the evening prayers. A parrot, Jakob feels, could have been taught to perform these functions just as well. Olga however regards them as a display of ability: she is making brief addresses.

About to be ordained in Christiania, Jakob meets Sister Agnes, a woman after his own heart; his ideal, his inspiration, his true love. But he is bound to the homely Olga. Agnes marries Per Sognevold, the friend of his college days. It is a clublike blow to Jakob, for she is the only one who really understands his attitude toward religion.

Jakob is ordained. His father, having satisfied his last wish, dies at the close of his son's ordination sermon. Sent to a small church in the north, Jakob takes Olga with him as his wife only in name. Pastor Jensen realizes that this is a bit involved, but Jakob can make a good speech. The Spanish influenza breaks out in the parish, Jakob renders the service—not the mere worship—of three ordinary men, Olga herself barely escapes death, and then they are legally married, have a child, and establish a real home. Pastor Jensen however receives a caller. Jakob has come to tell him that his resignation has been submitted. Jensen prays for his soul; Jakob is as happy as he can be in view of the memories he still has of Agnes. He takes over his father's estate and becomes as noble a citizen as the community knows.

This is the rough crayon sketch on the canvas and nothing more. The exquisite descriptions of nature, the problems connected with prohibition and non-individualistic politics, the discussions that take place between Jakob and his university friends concerning faith and history, the lessons drawn from "Peer Gynt" and other works of epoch making significance, the flirtations of Fru Blomberg, at

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whose home the prayer meeting is held, with Jakob, the allusions to the world war, the theatre in America, the summer season in the Norwegian resorts, the cynical but easily refuted remarks of assistant professor Liberg on the miserable mess of things in general, the soul struggles of the two leading characters, and the gripping but ever recurring situation that arises when a son is educated beyond his parents—these must be imagined. To comment on them would be idle, for here is the book itself calling as deep unto deep for translation. It is not excessive to contend that "The Great White Fold" has the plot of a Bojer, the message of a Hamsun, and the outdoor thrill of any writer who takes his vocation intelligently. What a "romance" as compared with "John Inglesant", by J. Henry Shorthouse, written forty years ago, when high schools were few and far between!

There is one thing, however, that even high schools fail to put into a man: will power. Jakob Haugen stood at the head of his class, elementary, high, college and university—the four seasons in the life of systematic education. But he lacked the will to show his parents that if they bent the twig too inelastically the tree would also be bent; the will to break away from Olga and marry Agnes; the will to overcome his own doubts; the will to straighten out the tangle that arose when he saw that faith is necessary if Bolshevism is not to get the upper hand, but that faith is one thing and the fundamentalists' facts about theology quite another.

Moreover, he lacked the will power to think in the pulpit. There is where his real difficulty lay. In his study, conversing with his friends, talking the matter over with Sister Agnes, he was faithful to intelligence. Once in the pulpit, he seemed to lose this faith; he seemed to sense the power of the unctuous word, the word detached from thought and, carefully analyzed, meaning nothing except that if you are good you will eventually join the great white fold. On his way home to his Sunday dinner, however, he realized that Copernicus dislocated a fixed and regional heaven four hundred and fifty years ago. He quit, and became, as he himself says, "a true worker in the vineyard". By his action he deprived Norway of what might have been an unusually great and good preacher. By his actions, he has enabled Peter Lykke-Seest to give the world (if publishers are willing and translators agreed) an unusually great and good bit of fiction.

ALLEN W. PORTERFIELD

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THE BOOKMAN'S LITERARY CLUB SERVICE

THE BOOKMAN *presents the tenth instalment of its series of literary club programs. Believing that clubs will welcome an outline which combines range of subject with an authoritative understanding of the end to be achieved, the editors have brought together representative committees of authors, students, and critics to evolve for the use of women's clubs an outline which will contain both elements. The divisions of the series are: I. Contemporary American Fiction (see* THE BOOKMAN *for October, November, December, January); II. Contemporary American Poetry; III. Contemporary American Drama; IV. The Short Story. After contemporary American literature has been covered, programs on the historical background of our literature will be given and these will be followed by a survey of the English field.*

The BOOKMAN *programs are formed, not by the editors of this magazine but by a board of advice which has been organized to include names from various lines of literary thought in America, so that the result will represent no one group. The executive committee of advice is as follows: Mary Austin, the novelist; Dr. Arthur E. Bostwick, librarian of the St. Louis Public Library; Dr. Carl Van Doren, one of the editors of "The Century"; Hon. Maurice Francis Egan, diplomat and literary critic; Mrs. L. A. Miller, chairman of literature, General Federation of Women's Clubs; May Lamberton Becker, of the "Reader's Guide" of the New York "Evening Post"; Dr. Joseph Fort Newton, rector of the Church of the Divine Paternity, New York City; Booth Tarkington, the novelist; and Rose V. S. Berry, chairman of the fine arts committee, General Federation of Women's Clubs.*

The editor of THE BOOKMAN *and his advisers and associates will answer promptly and to the best of their ability any questions confronting any literary club. Such questions should be addressed "*THE BOOKMAN'S *Literary Club Service."*

THE group of poets presented this month forms the sixth and last part of a study program of present day poetry. The committee have tried, in mapping out this program, both to show the varying trends of modern American poetry and to combine these differing elements into some sort of ordered pattern which might be easily followed. For this reason, the poets whose work is to be considered have been divided into groups. ("The New England Group", consisting of Edwin Arlington Robinson, Robert Frost, and Amy Lowell, may be found in the March number. "The Middle Western Group", including Vachel Lindsay, Carl Sandburg, and Edgar Lee Masters, appeared in April. In May Anna Hempstead Branch, Sara Teasdale, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and Grace Hazard Conkling formed the first half of the group of "Lyric Poets". The second half of the group, consisting of Louis Untermeyer, Witter Bynner, John Hall Wheelock, and William Rose Benét, was discussed in the June issue. And July was given over to "The Imagists", H. D. and John Gould Fletcher, and "The Ironists", Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, and Maxwell Bodenheim.) Of course, the same poet may belong to two or three groups. In such a case, the determining factor has been his most pronounced work.

The program is intended for a season's study. Yet in order not to make it too long, it has been considered wise to include only those poets already well known to the public. The committee wish it clearly understood that, in choosing these poets, every decision was made by ballot, the majority ruling.

The names of easily procurable books and magazine articles dealing

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with individual authors are listed after the account of the poet to whom they refer. As a general bibliography the following books are suggested:

References and Guides

Tendencies in Modern American Poetry. Amy Lowell. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.
New Voices. Marguerite Wilkinson. MACMILLAN.
An Introduction to Poetry. Hubbell and Beaty. MACMILLAN.

Poetry in General

Convention and Revolt in Poetry. John Livingston Lowes. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
A Study of Poetry. Bliss Perry. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
The Principles of English Versification. Paull F. Baum. HARVARD.
Lyric Forms from France. Helen Louise Cohen. HARCOURT, BRACE.

Anthologies

The New Poetry. Harriet Monroe and Alice Corbin Henderson. MACMILLAN.
Modern American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HARCOURT, BRACE.
A Miscellany of American Poetry, 1919. HARCOURT, BRACE.
American Poetry, 1922. HARCOURT, BRACE.

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POETRY

Committee: Amy Lowell, chairman; Grace Hazard Conkling, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Carl Sandburg, Sara Teasdale, Louis Untermeyer.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The appreciation of poetry is a most personal matter. The following program represents the painstaking effort of the above group of distinguished poets and critics. It includes only names of living Americans, and most of the younger poets were omitted as not having yet won their spurs. When this program was submitted for approval to the executive committee, suggestions and emendations were many. In few cases did the comments of any one member of the executive committee agree with those of another. For this reason, we have decided to publish the program as originally outlined by the poetry committee, without change. The biographies and quotations from critical material have been added by the editors of* THE BOOKMAN, *and for these the poetry committee is not responsible.*

The Experimentalists

ALFRED KREYMBORG

Mushrooms. KNOPF.

Of late, Alfred Kreymborg has taken to writing sonnets. That is a new departure, however, and this form is certainly not typical of his work. His curious, jerky rhythms, his abrupt manner of presenting an idea, his verse plays, his grotesque imagery, all prove him the experimentalist. He loves a good poetical joke. He likes to play with irony and to smile like an elf at cosmic problems. With all these brave showings of strangeness, he is yet extraordinarily gentle and gay in his work.

Kreymborg was born in New York City and educated in the schools there. He has passed his life in various pursuits akin to literature and involved with books. He is a lecturer, and his puppet plays have been well received both here and abroad.

"There is lustiness in Kreymborg too. He can be downright brutal without losing himself in brutality. And in 'Etching' and 'America' his sense of brusqueness intensifies ideas that are far from unusual. It is, in fact, from an intellectual standpoint that this group is weakest. Their revolt is so specious, their dissatisfaction so superficial. The chief defect of much of this

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poetry is not that it questions, but that it accepts evasive, half-formulated or factitious answers. Frequently its very questioning is a sham, being little more than a quibble about the externals of form. It often deceives itself by the mere technical twisting of a platitude; the breaking-up of a hackneyed thought into spasmodic lines; by a few erratic capitals and an inverted image. This impulse is dying rapidly; the war, with its tremendous responsibilities, its devastating vitality, has made these thin emotional substitutes seem doubly artificial. It is becoming increasingly difficult to shock one's readers with an intellectual concept that was stale in 1885, even though one dislocates prosody and punctuation in the attempt."—*Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry".*

"The poetry of 'Mushrooms' will be strong meat to admirers of Keats and Shelley. It is daring, heavy with its own conceit, eccentric, definitely blasphemous against older ideas of the substance of poetry, but withal a delight to truth lovers."—*"The Review of Reviews", August, 1916.*

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The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.
A Critical Fable. Anonymous. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.

LOLA RIDGE

Sun-up. HUEBSCH.

With determination, Lola Ridge has crystallized her power of Celtic imagination and turned from writing for the popular magazines to poetry. Although she was born in Dublin, Ireland, Miss Ridge has spent most of her life in Australia and New Zealand. It is perhaps the very contrast between her early environment and her New York surroundings that has produced a poem so thoroughly of New York as "The Ghetto". She writes of labor and its magnificence, of tragedy, and of strange characters, yet throughout she maintains her curious alertness to the inner mind, her delicate abstraction. She seems to transfer even to the rush and turmoil of crowded streets something of her own undeniable shyness.

"But it has remained for one reared far from our chaotic centers to appraise most poignantly the mingled squalor and beauty of our crowded streets. In 'The Ghetto and Other Poems' ... Lola Ridge brings a fresh background to set off her sensitive evaluations; her early life in Australia has doubtless enabled her to draw the American city with such an unusual sense of perspective. The city dominates her book; but the whole modern industrial world surges beneath it. 'The Song of Iron', with its glorification of Labor, is a veritable pæan of triumph. And yet out of these majestic lines, the still small voice of the poet makes itself heard; a strangely attenuated voice with a tense accent; a fineness that, seeming fragile, is like the delicacy of a thin steel spring. Nowhere does this distinction of utterance maintain itself so strikingly as in the title-poem."—*Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry".*

"The series of poems from which the book ['Sun-up'] takes its name are vividly poignant renderings of the child-mind intimate in their apperception and flaring forth in arresting magic and color at times. Her method is free verse, but it is a distinct free verse. It is the sudden throwing of vivid phrases before one that conjure up limitless thoughts."—*H. S. Gorman in the New York "Times", January 9, 1921.*

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The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.
Literary Abbozzo. Conrad Aiken. DIAL, *January* 25, 1919.

The Introspective Poets

CONRAD AIKEN

The Jig of Forslin. FOUR SEAS.
Punch. KNOPF.

At times, thoroughly imbued with the classical manner and scene, Conrad Aiken writes with smoothness and beauty. At other times, he suddenly lurches into passages of determined virility. He is a poet of many moods and of a splendid technique. With all his seeming objectivity he always brings a peculiar personal morbidness to bear on the objects or persons he describes. He knows the rich heritage of past poetical ages, and, though he never borrows, his

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pages are alive with not unpleasant echoings. His philosophy seems to be a sort of misty irony. Yet he has written poems full of incised and vivid beauty. He has never quite attained the union of technique and idea that makes the greatest poetry; but he is an able poet and a seeker of the vision.

Aiken was born in the south, in Georgia, in 1889. He was graduated from Harvard University and has made his home near there since, though he spends much time in England. A poet and a critic by trade, he mingles seldom with poets and critics. He is independent and fearless, and his opinions, though often quixotic, are always brilliantly expressed.

"The case of Conrad Aiken, a more than ordinarily gifted poet, is typical. Facile, energetic, critical, equipped with a strong feeling for verbal color and musical subtlety, it has seemed impossible for him to rise above either his own dexterity or his enthusiasm for some one else's discoveries. Each of his four successive books has held out the promise of a succeeding coordinated and distinctive volume — a promise that has never been kept. The intrusion of outside influences, or his too-great affection for his masters, or a sex myopia, or possibly a hyperæsthetic astigmatism, has prevented him from seeing clearly what he tries so anxiously to reveal. What stands out as the most prominent of Aiken's characteristics is his way of patterning after first one and then another of his contemporaries; at times he leans so heavily upon them that their strength becomes his weakness."—*Louis Untermeyer in "The New Era in American Poetry".*

"A poem of quite another kind is 'The Morning Song of Senlin' taken from a longer poem, 'Senlin: A Biography' by Conrad Aiken. It is a lyric that sets the immensity and grandeur of nature side by side with our little deeds of every day, in sharp contrast. It is very spontaneous and original. The dew of surprise is still fresh on it. Everybody who is sensitive to contrasts between great things and small, who is capable of wonder in the thought of rising in the morning to a new day in an ancient and everlasting universe, and of setting beside the glory of that new day the least and most trivial of occupations, has felt what is said in this poem. But nobody else has put just this thing into poetry of this kind. 'The Morning Song of Senlin' is a poem for imaginative people. Practical people may stumble over this juxtaposition of great things and small in it. They are accustomed to having poets tell them that grandeur and immensity are near at hand. But they are not accustomed to having the idea put into poetry in the words of a man who is only standing before a mirror and tying his necktie. They prefer to think that the person who speaks of grandeur is perched upon a remote and chilly hill-top with nothing to occupy him but contemplation, or that he paces some romantic stage with his eyes rolling in fine frenzy as he talks. They are tempted to forget that, for nearly everybody, the perception of beauty would be impossible if it had to be made into a vocation.

"Mr. Aiken's poem is brave with the elation of the morning and it is written with enough restraint to save it from any real and damaging incongruities. Moreover, Mr. Aiken *is a master of rhythm, and the cool* lyrical movement of the lines of this poem combines in a subtle and delicate way the qualities of speech and song."—*Marguerite Wilkinson in "New Voices".*

"Mr. Aiken took the theme of 'Punch' as Goethe took the theme of 'Faust', and his conception of his story is no less great than was Goethe's of his. If 'Punch' fails to receive a public response equal to that accorded to 'Faust', the reason does not lie in its conception or treatment, but in the fact that the 'Faust' story is more nearly related to common humanity. It may, or may not, be true that mankind is held in the net of an inexorable Fate; but, true or not, such a theory is certainly unpopular. What the public accepts or refuses in the realm of speculation need concern the poet no whit, however. He has got hold of a superb theme, and he has carried it out superbly. . . . It has never been in individual scenes that Mr. Aiken's long poems have failed; what he has not succeeded in has been the building up of the whole. His poetical architectonics have been weak. No such reproach attaches to 'Punch'. In this poem, the architectonics are beautifully managed. Nothing could be better than the progression of the different parts of the poem." — *Amy Lowell in "The New Republic", September 28, 1921.*

"It is an entertaining book ['Punch'] and it marks the breaking of new ground for Mr. Aiken. But the story is not developed so as to give us the whole of Punch's personality. On the side of Punch the braggart, Mr. Aiken is full enough, but he is not full on the side of Punch the villain. This is a pity; for as one reads what Punch has to tell us about his adventures with Polly Prim and his conquest of the Queen of Sheba, one sees Mr. Aiken making headway with a good story indeed."—*Padraic Colum in "The Freeman", April 13, 1921.*

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The New Era in American Poetry. Louis Untermeyer. HOLT.

New Voices. Marguerite Wilkinson. MACMILLAN.

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A Critical Fable. Anonymous. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
Conrad Aiken, Metaphysical Poet. J. G. Fletcher. DIAL, May 31, 1919.

JEAN STARR UNTERMEYER

Growing Pains. HUEBSCH.
Dreams Out of Darkness. HUEBSCH.

Jean Starr Untermeyer has written from the standpoint of the woman of maturity. Her lyrics are rich in feminine passion and wisdom. They have a touch, too, of mysticism. Yet they display also keen intellectual integrity. More colorful and whimsical than most of the younger women poets, Mrs. Untermeyer allows her rich imagination to play without repression over the varying moods of ripening womanhood.

Mrs. Untermeyer was born in Zanesville, Ohio, and came to New York City to attend boarding school. In 1907 she married Louis Untermeyer, the poet and critic. Her interests are fairly evenly divided among family, poetry, and music.

"Close akin to the poetry of love, in the minds of women, is the poetry of motherhood and home. And this chapter would hardly be complete without brief mention of two poems about birth. They are 'The Canticle of The Babe', by Josephine Preston Peabody, a subjective lyric of motherhood with unusual dignity and beauty, and 'Birth' by Jean Starr Untermeyer, a poem which tells what another woman feels, standing beside a young mother in her hour of travail. Mrs. Untermeyer's poem, 'Autumn' is also an interesting and original piece of work. It celebrates 'pickling day' and is neither humorous nor sentimental as poems of the home used to be. Instead it has something of the dignity that rightly belongs to the most fundamental of all labors, the labor of preparing food, and it pays tribute, in high, just fashion to the genius of the home who is the genius of the folk, the mother."—*Marguerite Wilkinson in "New Voices".*

"The lyrics in 'Dreams Out of Darkness' surpass those in Mrs. Untermeyer's first book, 'Growing Pains'. She has grown. The growth is made evident in the sincere subjectivity of her new work, in the intensity of the new moods, in the freedom and subtlety of the new organic rhythms which she uses. . . . This book strikes deep and reaches high. It has strong roots and brave branches." — *Marguerite Wilkinson in* THE BOOKMAN, December, 1921.

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ELINOR WYLIE

Nets to Catch the Wind. HARCOURT, BRACE.

Sparse, brilliant, cold, personal, full of a strange, sharp beauty — such are the lyrics of Elinor Wylie. Mrs. Wylie within the past two years quickly made an impression in the field of American poetry. Hers are the poems of a brooding, sensitive soul, yet of a highly intelligent and analytical one. They are characterized by extreme restraint both of idea and of technique. It is too early in her career to label this characteristic a limitation. So far it has proved to be a mannerism. There is, nevertheless, a quality of almost mystic vision that illuminates her work and gives it power and magic.

"It is a style which, unlike many others, never falls down or turns bad. Its accuracy never misses; its colors are always right—two qualities exceedingly rare in contemporary American verse."—*Edmund Wilson in* THE BOOKMAN, *February, 1922.*

"Mrs. Wylie, who has just flashed across the poetic horizon with a burnished intellectuality, evidently believes that the world will end in ice. Hers is a congealed brilliance. The world she inhabits is never unreal but it is a world of sudden angles and cold corners seen by moonlight. Emotion is not absent here but it is passion frozen at its source; it glitters but it rarely glows. Mrs. Wylie has made more than an auspicious beginning. But to go farther she must give herself less reservedly."—*Louis Untermeyer in "The New Republic", December 28, 1921.*

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THE GOSSIP SHOP

WHAT is the real touchstone of criticism? What is the magic rule by which we can measure real art? Again and again our critics have propounded their theories. Each one must find it for himself. There is no easy way. Yet "Hieroglyphics" by Arthur Machen seems to us one of the most brilliant and clear expositions of a critical theory we have ever read. It is, in a sense, unusually personal. Machen says, "What is it that differentiates fine literature from a number of grammatical, or partly grammatical sentences arranged in a more or less logical order? Why is the Odyssey to come in, why is the 'literature' of the evening paper to be kept out? And again, to put the question in a more subtle form: To which class do the works of Jane Austen belong?" Here indeed is the old but knotty problem. To make the matter more immediate for us, "Where, then, shall we place Amy Lowell, or the works of Mr. Zane Grey?" In the following paragraph Mr. Machen gives his answer, an answer which he elaborates over many pages that we are sure you will find illuminating.

> Well, as you may have guessed, I have my solution, and I like it none the less because the word of the enigma seems to me actually but a single word. Yes, for me the answer comes with the one word, *Ecstasy*. If ecstasy be present, then I say there is fine literature; if it be absent, then, in spite of all the cleverness, all the talents, all the workmanship and observation and dexterity you may show me, then, I think, we have a product (possibly a very interesting one) which is not fine literature.

Is it not the difference in the quantity of *ecstasy* that marks the distinction between Longfellow and Shelley, between Edgar A. Guest and Edna St. Vincent Millay?

The death of Pierre Loti reminds us that although nowadays the majority of novels are either filmed or dramatized, enabling the average author to see his own characters made flesh, it is a unique thing for an author to be confronted with himself in a work of art. Loti, indeed, is the solitary example we know of. He wrote an autobiographical novel, "Le Mariage de Loti", based on his experiences while stationed in Tahiti as a young naval officer. Badly wounded through an act of vengeance, he was nursed back to life in the jungle by a native maiden. Her love for the young white man, and her hope that her feeling would be reciprocated, were shattered abruptly by his return to duty, which involved his departure from the island; and she poisoned herself (so the story goes) with a deadly South Sea flower. After the publication of the novel Loti consented to a musical production of it at the Opéra Comique in Paris, with the setting and characters undisguised. We have just been rereading the essay in which Loti describes the uncanny sensation of seeing this resuscitation of himself as he was twenty years earlier. "Mon Dieu!" he exclaimed as he awaited the lifting of the curtain at the theatre. "I withdraw as far back as I can into a dark corner behind the Queen of Serbia, who has done me the honour to invite me to her box, and who divines and sympathises with the sudden feeling of anguish that has come over me. . . ." He is even compelled to crave permission to withdraw

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altogether, for he fears lest his feelings should overcome him; he is ashamed of the tears that spring to his eyes as he beholds the naval cadet who "I am vaguely aware, is becoming myself!" When the stage princess (his other love on the island) calls his name, "Loti!" he is as thrilled as if he were being directly addressed after all those years. Finally, he is obliged to go behind the scenes at the close, and congratulate his double and the singer who represents the native girl. "But it is not myself at all", he writes sadly, "who is now speaking to them."

The last article written by Emerson Hough before his death appeared in "The Story World and Photodramatist". It was written as part of a symposium, "Are Americans People?", written at the request of the editor. We quote the closing paragraphs which exhibit Mr. Hough's sturdy Rooseveltian brand of Americanism:

This must be one country, with one flag. We are young, inchoate, unformed, but one day we shall have the greatest literature the world has ever known. It will be a literature large, simple, clean and strong, free of all affectation, careless of praise or censure, speaking in the eternal verities. The literature of America's tomorrow is the one hope of the world.

Meantime, I think none of us who are Americans need apologize for the fact, nor much concern ourselves over these other flags and their agitated surrounders. They harm no one. Are Americans people? Some of them are, and are gutful enough to say so. I raise no forlorn flag of culture, by my fishing stream. For those who do not like my country and its ways, I am sorry, but suggest that Ellis Island gates open both ways now. For the malcontent I recommend a trip to Europe — and no return to this America which they so much despise. Mayhap Europe may give them universities, penitentiaries, a literature and an art which shall suit them better than do our own.

This, of course, product of a relatively illiterate and uncultured brain, may be treason in the eyes of many real intellectuals. I am sorry I may not further pursue the theme, but really, the trout season soon will open. I must attend to my real business. Thank God! my trees, my trout, are still American.

EMERSON HOUGH.

Chicago, 1923.

California seems to recreate authors. We remember Witter Bynner's tanned composure when he returned last season from that splendid state. Genevieve Taggard, with husband and baby, has now returned. When she

Genevieve Taggard

left New York City, the poetess was beautiful but, somehow, fragile. Now she looks, not older, but more mature. California has made her a woman, just as beautiful —healthier. She finds that she can write better in the east. For this reason she has returned to us. Her living arrangements this summer are a triumph of artistic domestic arrangement. Within a radius of a few miles she lives, her husband lives, the baby lives; but all under different roofs. This is because they feel (I suppose the baby, though small, is precocious) that they can accomplish more in their various pursuits apart

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from each other, yet near enough to visit when the spirit moves. At any rate, it is good to have Miss Taggard in the vicinity of New York again.

The reviewer of Edward Bok's "A Man From Maine" in the July BOOKMAN was not only laboring under the misapprehension that Cyrus K. Curtis was dead, but he apparently could not have read the book very carefully. We tender our humble apologies to Mr. Curtis, Mr. Bok, and the gentle reader. We do not like our editorial staff to be caught so seriously napping at any time. Mr. Curtis has always been a good friend to the magazine and we admire and respect him, both for his sterling qualities of character and his tremendous achievements. We knew perfectly well that he was in Europe for the summer and far, far from the grave. However, we can do no more, now, than apologize.

The book prize for a review of a review this month goes to Captain Elbridge Colby for his frank estimate of Robert Cortes Holliday's opinion of "The Farington Diary". At last we are commencing to receive the sort of contribution we have been awaiting, for our monthly prize. We hope for more and even better ones. The prize for next month will be a copy of Aldous Huxley's "On the Margin".

Why all this fuss and pother about "The Farington Diary"? To be sure Robert Cortes Holliday says that the old R. A. "saw only the surface" and "did not penetrate to ideas at all" and yet that same BOOKMAN reviewer remarks that "to give a just value of the varied contents of this volume is, perhaps, a thing beyond the reach of a review of moderate length." Space given to critiques should be commensurate with the importance of the works under notice. At such a rate, instead of being "The Book of the Month", "The Farington Diary" would deserve merely the following:

"Covering a span of years just before and just after the beginning of the nineteenth century, this so called diary is principally a jumble of biographical facts founded on unreliable contemporary gossip, more disorderly than a useful encyclopædia, more superficial than the "Dictionary of National Biography", and of less use to serious scholars than the scandal columns of "The Town and Country Magazine". Its anecdotes are less illuminating and its characterizations less sound than those readily to be found in the multitude of biographies and autobiographies of the period. Its printing is merely an indication in a publisher of that unwise fondness for and uncritical dependence on 'manuscript' material, which has added to the canon of English literature many newly discovered, but worthless, bits of 'unprinted' documents and has distorted the judgments of even such good historians as Bancroft. Alas, it now will encumber many shelves, instead of one!"

It is strange how the same names persist when one turns to the poetry of the magazines. We are willing to admit that the fact that we choose poems by the same persons month after month may be due partly to personal prejudice. However, only partly. It is largely due to the talent of certain individuals that the magazine verse of America is kept even vaguely above the level of mere sentimental rot. Each one of the poems we have chosen this month is written, we notice after the choosing, by a fairly steady contributor to the magazines. They are "Romance" by Elinor Wylie in "The Century"; "Moors" by Winifred Welles in "The New Republic"; "In Envy of Cows" by Joseph Auslander in "The New Republic"; "Our Singing Strength" by Robert Frost in "The New Republic"; "To a Dying Man" by Edna St. Vincent Millay in "Vanity Fair"; and "The Pass" by Hazel Hall in "Contemporary Verse".

We have just read a devastating book. It has bright scarlet covers stamped in gold. This of itself is an insult on a hot day, on the hottest day,

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we may safely say. It is called "What to Talk About" and the entire theory of the book is that people like to talk about themselves. Armed with this volume, whose subtitle is "The Clever Question", a débutante would be a most terrifying creature; for the book not only furnishes her with appropriate questions but with nice tidy little anecdotes for proper occasions. We believed in the book through "Bachelors". For example, we should not mind if a nice dark haired young lady should coyly ask, "Are most bachelors misogynists?" But presently we turned to page 48 where, immediately following "Dentists", come "Editors". "What are authors really like?" is a leading question, according to Imogene B. Wolcott, the lady editor of this confidential guidebook. To a person who collects books you should say, "Are all very old books valuable?" Then, to a person whose hobby is birds, "Do birds 'talk' to one another?" — and the story labeled "Apropos" is as follows:

Sea captain (introducing friend to his old aunt): "This is my old friend Barker. He lives in the Canary Islands."

"How interesting," murmured auntie. "Then of course you sing." — *New York Globe.*

Ask a person who has lived in or visited Niagara Falls: "Did you see many 'Honeymooners' at Niagara?" Alas and alack, what a book! — and a warm day, too. To anyone whose hobby is hot weather, we suggest: "Why do you like the heat?" Answer: *!!--

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Viola Price Franklin of the Willamette University Library writes us of the dedication of the Poet's Corner in J. K. Gill's great bookshop in Portland, Oregon. This Poet's Corner, it seems, has long been an idea of John T. Hotchkiss, head of the book department. On April 23, birthday of Shakespeare and the Oregon poet, Edwin Markham, the dedication took place. There was a song by Frances Gill. There was Judge Methuen, sitting by the great stone fireplace which is the most comforting feature of the Corner. There was a speech by Mr. Gill. There was Anne Shannon Monroe, presiding gracefully. A poem of Edwin Markham's was read. Various other Oregon poets contributed verses. Among them, the following from Hazel Hall, whose new volume "Walkers" was published on that very day:

Since the first poet spoke, silence has sound,
The silence of all hurt and lovely things
Has wakened into speech, is caught and wound
With music in the song the singer sings.

Then hear, where he has voice, all silence break;
Silence of ecstasy, silence of grief;
Hear silence of the oak whose branches shake
Into the grass the acorns and the leaf.

If only all bookshops would take poetry as seriously as this, what a millennium for our poets there would be!

Anyone wishing a short history of art should have gone through the entertaining though confusing exhibition of the Salons of America, held at the American Art Galleries, New York. Everything was there, in contrasts, from modern sculpture to Egyptian bas reliefs. One of the latter had a figure with an attractive smile — somehow we had never thought of the Egyptians as anything but stiffly solemn. There were Chinese pottery, Daumier's drawings, Gothic art, Picasso in a room with illuminated manuscripts, modern paintings. We listened in on a discussion: do the French have a higher art sense than the Americans, or is it that a larger number have real appreciation? We don't know, but we did like the paintings and water colors of Cé-

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zanne which had evidently evoked the argument. . . . The exhibit at Wanamaker's would make one think that New York was the logical birthplace of cubist art, rather than wherever the Spaniard, Picasso, happened to be living. For many of the artists represented used the city to good advantage. New York really does look like that — there were Charles Sheeler's lovely photographs as proof. Not that the artists all saw it from this point of view; they caught it, from one end to the other, in various moods. Walkowitz had a good impression of the lights and crowd of Times Square. Fred Dana Marsh, in "Derrick Riggers", had a sense of monotone more frequent in the city than in this exhibition. The old prints of Nieuw Amsterdam were amusing to study. . . . A collection of interesting Dutch furniture and old masters was shown at the Art Centre. Alas, we have but space to say that in our opinion one still life must hold the record for the most slippery fish ever painted.

We have heard talk of criticism, vulgar and impudent, in American papers. Some such, to be sure, we have read. What was our surprise to discover, in a staid English review, the following remarks concerning F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Tales of the Jazz Age": "All the stories appear to us to bear the impress of one manner only, a manner peculiar to a certain type of American magazine and to all West-End tailor's shops. They have a thoroughly smart and well-creased effect, and perhaps the most appropriate general criticism upon 'Tales of the Jazz Age' would be to say that there are no flies on the author." However, this may be overlooked, since we found in the same journal a vastly penetrating study of Aldous Huxley whose essays seem to have been received with genuine applause in London. We have always maintained that the expertness of British writing was due, in large degree, to inherited traditions of literary style and manner of thinking. We do not mean to say that it is impossible to learn to write without a certain line of forebears; but we do feel that it is impossible under other conditions to write with the grace and distinction, the high sophistication that marks the work of such a young man as Huxley.

Aldous Huxley

There remains the question: what makes Mr. Huxley a first-class literary journalist? I believe that part of the answer may be found by examining his family tree. Good journalism is in his blood. His distinguished grandfather, T. H. Huxley, as his "Collected Essays" show, was one of the first scientists who could and would write about science for the ordinary man in bright and intelligible articles. His great-uncle, Matthew Arnold, was a journalist of the very highest class, who wrote about Homer, Christianity, anarchy, or Celtic literature in good, easy English prose, which even the readers of the monthly reviews could understand. About his more famous aunt, Mrs. Humphry Ward, it is unnecessary to say anything, for whether as a novelist or an essayist she showed that power of compelling you to read what she wrote which is the secret of the born journalist.

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From Los Angeles comes an odd bit of gossip. Thomas Ford sends it.

Probably one of the most unique book orders ever booked by a merchant was given to Robinson's of this city today. A patron called on the phone and asked that every book reviewed on the literary page of the "Times" last Sunday be sent to her home. The order was promptly filled and the following books delivered:

"Our American Adventure" (Doran); "Victoria" (Knopf); "The Dancer of Shamahka" (Dutton); "The Last of the Vikings" (Century); "Downstream" (Knopf); "Oxford Poetry, 1921"; "Oxford Poetry, 1922" (Appleton); "A Mother's Letters to a Schoolmaster" (Knopf); "The Craftsmanship of the One Act Play" (Little, Brown); "English Literature During the Last Half-Century" (Macmillan); "How to Produce Amateur Plays" (Little, Brown); "Studies in Empire and Trade" (Longmans); "Being Respectable" (Harcourt, Brace); and "The Voice at Johnnywater" (Little, Brown).

The west, and particularly Los Angeles, may be barbarous — H. L. Mencken says so — but at least the denizens of this benighted region read and their reading is not confined to the fluff and froth of present day literature. If the above order is a straw indicating the direction of taste, we venture to say that that taste is fairly broad.

In reading "Knuckles and Gloves" — an account, by Bohun Lynch, of thirty-three famous ring battles — one thing impressed us tremendously, probably for a personal reason. It was the chapter on "Little Men". Thus, he describes one of the smallest:

Not at any weight nor at any time was the Championship of England held by a better boxer or a straighter man.

One other little man — the littlest of all — must be mentioned, because, in the whole history of boxing there has never been any one quite like him — Jimmy Wilde, called in his younger days "The Tylorstown Terror". This minute Welshman was born in 1892, and stands just over 5 feet 3 inches, and his weight is, at the age of thirty, recorded as 7 stone 6 lb. The photograph of him reproduced as an illustration to this book, suggests many things, but certainly not a bruiser who has knocked out alone (not to mention the more laborious method of beating opponents) over a hundred men, and who has fought several hundred battles. To see him, in or out of the ring, to observe his pallor and square-shouldered fragility, makes his record seem like a rather foolish fairy-story. He used to give stones away in weight where you would think he could hardly spare ounces. It is all very well for men like Tom Sayers, or Carpentier, to give away a little; they were fine strong men. But you don't expect a chaffinch to attack an albatross.

Wilde is beautifully made in little and his strength is sheerly amazing, his hitting power, not only in relation to his size, terrific. He is a highly skilled boxer, but the might of his blows is almost magical. It is only the body's weight behind the striking hand which makes a blow really hard — and what is seven stone?

Alas! *sic transit gloria mundi* — Mr. Wilde has now gone down before Sancho Villa, a fight that we regret having missed.

That the various poetry prizes offered by various organizations and individuals in the United States have done much to stimulate poetry in this country is unquestioned. One of the most important of these is the Blindman Prize offered by the Poetry Society of South Carolina. Last year Amy Lowell, acting as the judge, awarded it to Grace Hazard Conkling for her poem "Variations on a Theme". This year John Erskine, acting as sole judge, awarded it to Leonora Speyer for her poem "Oberammergau", with honorable mention to Richard Butler Glaenzer for his poem "Leaves of a Sapling".

The First International Congress on Motion Picture Arts, in which the Authors' League cooperated with the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation, served as a means for bringing together as remarkable a collection of writers as one would care to meet. We attended only one session, since we were about to leave town; but that was enough to convince us that, after all, a group of authors, even on a hot day, look more than merely respectable. W. B. Maxwell, who came over from

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England to attend the congress, is a tall, spare gentleman. He speaks well. He is modest. He seems sincere. An author after our own heart. His "The Day's Journey" is a pretty splendid book, if you haven't read it. For the first time, we saw Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews, whose short stories were read aloud to us when we were a child and whose "The Courage of the Commonplace" is our favorite story about Yale. She, too, is quiet and gentle. Jesse Lynch Williams, Clayton Hamilton, and Elmer Rice formed a sort of drama trio, and they seemed always to be putting their heads together. Next to us sat Robert Stead, the president of the Canadian Authors' Association, and John Murray Gibbon, its ex-president. Not far away was Fannie Hurst chatting gaily with Mr. Melcher of "The Publishers' Weekly". William MacLeod Raine we met for the first time — a thin wiry man who looks not unlike James Oliver Curwood, who looks not unlike Zane Grey. What is it that the open spaces do to these gentlemen? Adolph Zukor, Henry W. Taft, Ellis Parker Butler, and George Barr Baker variously presided while we were present. Later, we hear there were words of strength as well as wisdom; but while we were there it was all very sweet and should have been helpful. There was always just a tendency toward the reforming instinct. A good understanding of the difference between propaganda and art would help those who wish to change the motion picture, we should fancy.

Not long ago we had a virulent letter from a nice man in New Hampshire. He was annoyed at Your Gossip. Very annoyed. Whenever you have nothing else to write about, he implied, you fix on poor old Vermont, and take a fling at that. Why not? It's our complex. It's our state. Whenever we have seen too many authors or plays or actors or what not, we run away to Vermont. We advise it for others. Burlington, Vermont, recently celebrated her 150th anniversary. It was a memorable occasion. A historical pageant with a gorgeous setting of pines proved most effective. Vice President Coolidge, a native Vermonter, who spoke, glorified the Green Mountain Boys. What a good sterling crowd they must have been — Ethan and Ira Allen, Remember Baker. We are proud that our own Colonel John Chipman served under Ethan Allen. The Vice President told us much about sheep shearing. The oldest sheep shearer in Vermont had given the Vice President a picture of himself and Mr. Coolidge, touched, was suddenly reminiscent of his grandfather. The rest of our trip to Vermont fades, however, before the memory of one sunset. To the west, gold-edged piled purple clouds, conventional enough over the silhouetted Adirondacks; to the south, the lake growing ruffled and angry, still blue; to the east a flushed haze of saffron over a deep blue sapphire sky slashed across by a brilliant rainbow!

Sir James Barrie has lately been speaking of the sweet nature of Andrew Lang, and we are having plenty of proof, in the reviews of the four volumes of Lang's poetry which his widow has collected and published, as to how unforgetably that sweet nature left its impression on his contemporaries. Most pleasing of all, however, are the manifestations of regard for this incomparable man of letters which have been shown by a younger generation that could hardly have known him at all, except through his work. Lang was the kind of writer who would have

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felt more at home in our time, we think, than he did in his own decade, for there are still a few stern greybrows belonging to previous ages who frown at a mere mention of his name. He was too unorthodox for them in his methods, so much so that they suspected him of charlatanry. A characteristic story of his apparently easy-going ways has just been told to us by an old varsity colleague of his, who remembers how, when Andrew Lang was invited one year to deliver the famous Romanes lectures at a Scottish centre of learning, he shocked his audience by standing up before them without either notes or manuscript, without evidence of any preparation whatsoever, despite that his remuneration was to be some hundreds of pounds! They were accustomed to lecturers who looked as if they had burned much midnight oil and suffered untold agonies in recognition of the momentous occasion looming ahead of them. Lang's lectures, however, proved to be excellent in manner and matter alike. He gleefully confided to his friends that he could not resist outraging the "dry-as-dusts", and thus he had committed to memory every word of his lectures before he came on to the platform! Book collectors will be disapopinted to hear, by the way, that the prices of first edition copies of Lang's works have shown signs of falling since his death. The explanation is given to us by a bookseller. The "eclectic" kind of collector prefers to gather together only the pick of an author's writings to represent anyone not of the highest rank. "The world holds such vast quantities of books", our bookseller remarks, "and the shelves of one's library are so few. It would take a whole bookcase to hold the complete set of volumes produced by Lang; and the only examples sought after are the fairy books, each of which has a certain value. 'The Blue Fairy Book', the earliest of that charming annual series, is perhaps the most in demand. The large paper illustrated edition, limited to 150 copies, and published in 1891, has advanced to five guineas. Twenty-five shillings would have procured a copy twenty years ago."

We have recently served as a juryman — and we have made our annual pilgrimage to Coney Island. There is something distressingly similar about the two experiences. During the two weeks of our servitude under a pleasant gentleman, Justice Leyden, we served on only one case — all about a lady, an apartment, a city marshal, and someone's unpaid debts. It was filled with human interest, so to speak, and we enjoyed ourself for a brief period. Sitting on a hard bench, however, waiting to be excused, reminded us too much of grammar school. Judge Wells has written a nice book all about how one feels when one is a juror. If you've been a juror and wish to laugh at yourself, purchase the book. We've forgotten the title. It is green with gold on the cover — that will enable you to find it. Luna Park has a new feature called the Love Nest which looks entrancing. We did not enter. We were not at the moment in love. Chute the Chutes has its undying charm for us. We like Edna, the elephant, and squandered our patrimony for peanuts which she ate, bags at a time. For the two headed cow we have no affection; but the largest bull in the world fascinated us — also a hen with a human face. Our companion was not a devotee of scenic railways, which left a gap in our life. There is nothing so perfect as an afternoon spent on giant racers,

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bobbers, whirlers, and jumpers. A good shake for the soul is a necessity at least once a season.

The south, ever since H. L. Mencken hurt its literary feelings, has been organizing for literature, so to speak. Here we have a "Directory of Missouri Writers", published by the Missouri Writers Guild. Among its honorary members we find Winston Churchill, Homer Croy, Rupert Hughes, Fannie Hurst, and many more of renown. Here, too, is "Verse, 1905-1923" from the University of Missouri, with Orrick Johns represented, and verses by several other gentlemen and ladies of talent, including one Sara Saper. There is drama in her "Bacchanal":

Long rows of sinners warming
At the fires of Sabbath righteousness.
An old maid in a brown hat,
Wistful as a letter lying unclaimed,
Bows her head in silent prayer. . . .
Coins tinkling to the floor
From a child's damp hands.
There's a fat tenor in the paid choir —
Bacchus in a surplice
And singing hymns!

And from the Poetry Guild, Nashville, comes an excellently printed collection which they have called "Driftwood Flames". Robert Penn Warren's "The Golden Hills of Hell" has a bizarre quality of mysticism that recalls Blake.

O, fair the Golden Hills of Hell,
    Where lightly rest the purple lilies;
There, as all the saints tell
    Lightly nod the lilies.

Dim beyond the scarlet river,
    Slenderly and slow they nod,
Glimpsed from where the splendors quiver
    On the minarets of God.

False tales the saints tell
    Of the slender lilies;
For I have knelt on the Hills of Hell
    Among the withered lilies.

Not long ago we met H. Halliday Sparling, a tall spare Englishman who was an intimate of William Morris, working with him in his editorial and printing ventures. He tells the most extraordinary stories of the great poet's energy. It seems that Morris could never be still. He would surround himself with designs of wallpaper in various states of incompletion, also with a sheaf of papers containing parts of some metrical translation from the classics. He would sit at his table, translate, then of a sudden rush to one of the designs, add a few touches, return to his translation. In his printing of books he was, of course, the greatest stickler for technique. The corners of the globe must be scoured for the right parchment. If the making of a particular kind of paper was a lost art, someone must be found somehow who knew the secret. The art must be revived for Morris. A man of tremendous will power and constant energy. His vitality knew no bounds.

William Morris

He turned it in every direction, nor did he fail in any one of his several arts. What a calm dry foil Sparling, with his quiet sense of humor, must have been for the volatile William Morris.

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Sent us, for review, is the "Vocabulary Builder Notebook" by Professor Kilduff of the English Department of New York University. Alas, the very phrase "building a vocabulary" is, somehow, annoying. Imagine carrying a little notebook in the pocket and collecting new words with the assiduity of a mushroom picker. We'd far rather swallow the dictionary. However, Professor Kilduff is aware of the pitfalls. He urges *discrimination* in the addition of words. Four points of advice he assures us "may be helpful" are as follows:

1. Don't add long uncommon words for the mere purpose of impressing persons with your knowledge. Exs. *Calligrapher* (a good penman); *educationalist* (educator); *contumacious* (headstrong).
2. Don't add archaic or obsolete words. Exs. *Ycleped* (called); *quoth* (said); *bedight* (adorned).
3. Exercise discretion in adding technical words (those peculiar to a trade, an art, or a science). Exs. *Champfer; easement; chiaroscuro.*
4. Choose foreign words sparingly. Your conversation or writing will seem affected and pedantic if a foreign word is used to express a meaning that an English word can express just as well. Exs. *Hoi polloi* (the rabble); *zeitgeist* (spirit of the times); *rôle* (part). In some instances, however, no English word will do so well.

John Galsworthy was the chief founder of the P.E.N. club two years ago, but despite his fine influence on the London branch it has become known chiefly as a monthly dining institution for "littery" folk at "swell" hotels. We are happy to record, however, that a valiant effort has been made to justify its subtitle, "An International Club for Writers". Delegates from each of the countries with which the club has had connections were invited to come over for a May-time festival, and among those who notified their intention of being present at the opening dinner in the Savoy Hotel were Edwin Arlington Robinson, Gerhart Hauptmann, Romain Rolland, Thor Hedberg (director of Stockholm's leading theatre), Johan Bojer, Blasco Ibáñez, and Martin Andersen Nexö. (Nexö, by the way, stayed during his visit with C. A. Bang, Heinemann's manager, to whom his New York friends will be glad to offer their congratulations on his recent marriage.) Not the least welcome of those authors from the continent would have been Hauptmann, Germany's greatest living author. But alas, certain delegates who shall remain unnamed protested against his presence in the same city as they, just as four years ago they would have protested against his being in the same world. Consequently a miserable hint was conveyed to him that he would not be unanimously welcomed, and he stayed away! This makes sad reading. We met Hauptmann in Berlin two years ago, at the conclusion of a performance of "Die Weber" (The Weavers) in the Grosses Schauspielhaus. The author had journeyed from his estate in Upper Silesia to supervise the production. He is a medium sized man of sixty, sturdy and freckled as one who has lived much in the sunlight, his splendid forehead well wrinkled, and only a suggestion of hardness at his mouth marring a very genial countenance. As we talked together we could see that the good opinion of English speaking authors was anxiously desired by this poet, novelist, and dramatist. His volume of poetic plays, published about that time, conveyed exactly the same impression. He was a man who, in spite of his own great power, stretched out his hands helplessly toward a forbidden shore. Alas, that it is a shore from which the P.E.N. Club has been un-

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able to lift the ban! Hauptmann drew aside the curtain, for a moment as we talked, from his own early struggles. He had seemed to us to look questioningly at the sensational success of "Die Weber" in postwar Germany, for it belonged to the early, naturalistic period from which he had long since emancipated himself. "And yet," he exclaimed, "why should I begrudge the popularity of 'The Weavers'? It came of the indignation of a young man who in his own grandfather had encountered the bitter tragedy of the Silesian workers. You see, I am myself of these humble country folk. Energy and good fortune enabled my grandfather to change his trade of weaving for that of a waiter, and later he bought the inn which was conducted by my father until we children grew into youth. When, through a turn of fortune, my father lost his business, I was withdrawn from school and sent out to earn my livelihood as a farmer. Perhaps I might never have passed through a 'naturalistic' period at all had I not been endowed with the observation that springs from suffering and with an almost morbid exactness of vision."

Laura B. Everett of California raises the question:

Who says the home is an institution of the past? Here is Joseph Conrad, in a preface to his wife's cook book, announcing himself as a product of her cookery.

We are not so sure whether or not Joseph is a good recommendation for anybody's cook book. That raises the question: is a tendency toward the psychological the result of digestion or indigestion? With "a stomach the existence of which he never knew anything", Joseph Conrad might have written Zane Grey's stories or Mrs. Porter's "Pollyanna".

If we take the Conrad view of the Carlyles (without blaming Jane for the indigestion which Thomas acquired before he met her), should not we give Jane the credit for Carlyle's literary achievements?

We may say that when asked by a lady reporter whether men or women made better cooks, Conrad replied that women were better on the average but men attained higher peaks in the art of cookery. Is it not true in any pursuit where intellect as well as instinct is brought into play?

One's home town folk should never tell tales — but they *are* entertaining. From Myrtle Koon Cherryman comes the following bit:

The world tour of the opera "song birds" in Alden Jewell's novel "The White Kami" reminds one of his early stage experiences. But of still greater interest to his Grand Rapids friends is the memory of "The Imperial Theatre Company" of his earlier histrionic preoccupations. There might seem an incongruity in that title as attached to the little audience room in the attic of the Jewell residence, where the box of a stage was a tight fit for Coriolanus and Co.; but the theatre possessed numbered seats, a real box office, 'n' everything, and those who attended Alden's Shakespeare performances there usually took them quite seriously. No one who saw him as Hamlet, long legged and seventeen, with his plump and rosy Ophelia of fourteen, ever thinks of that performance without genuine admiration, for there was something in the sincerity of these youngsters that commanded respect.

But if "Hamlet" didn't make us laugh, there was one incident connected with his later efforts that brings reminiscent chortles to his old friends nowadays. When Alden grew more ambitious, he wrote a one act play — a highly ethical composition for three male characters, called "Belief in Man", and produced it with two other High School boys — one of whom, by the way, Otto Brower, is now "in pictures". A local vaudeville house allowed the boys to produce their sketch for one whole week on the bill, and one day at rehearsal another student appeared, as reporter from the Central High "Helios", asking quite solemnly for an interview.

"Mr. Jewell", said the reporter — now a prominent lawyer in his home town — addressing Alden as though he were a stranger and a professional, "what was it that made you take up the stage as a profession?"

Then it was that Alden unfurled his long limbs in a mock heroic pose and, flinging an adolescent arm toward heaven, enunciated grandiloquently:

"Ask a bird why it sings!"

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